DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 281 061 CE 047 036

TITLE	Learning Again. A Guide to Helping Dysphasic Adults with Basic Communication Skills.
INSTITUTION	Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit, London (England).
REPORT NO	ISBN-0-906509-43-2
PUB DATE	Jun 84
NOTE	59p.; The use of gray backgrounds for the assessment and other forms may affect legibility.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Adult Education; *Aphasia; Case Studies; *Communication Disorders; *Communication Skills; Educational Diagnosis; Educational Needs; Foreign Countries; Needs Assessment; Postsecondary Education; Rehabilitation; Skill Development; *Speech Therapy; Student Evaluation; *Tutoring
IDENTIFIERS	*Dysphasia

ABSTRACT

This guide is intended to assist individuals (including therapists, relatives and friends, and volunteer and paid tutors) who are attempting to help adults relearn communication skills lost through stroke or accident. The first section examines dysphasia and the needs of dysphasics in an attempt to help the layperson understand the causes of dysphasia and its effects on a person's ability to communicate. A section on assessment covers initial and formal assessment, reassessment, and prognosis. It provides guidelines for assessing students' skills in the areas of understanding, speech, reading, and writing; discusses the need to record assessment finding; and describes making effective tutoring plans. The next section covers using a tutoring plan and examines the areas of understanding, speech, reading, and writing in general terms. Four case studies and appropriate teaching strategies for use in each situation are presented in the next section. Provided next is a list of books and materials that tutors working in the field of dysphasia have found useful. A tutorial project to help dysphasic adults that is operating in Essex, England, is described with special emphasis on the details of setting up service delivery (including necessary liaisons, ways of finding and using helpers, training for tutors, student recruitment, difficulties in finding appropriate transport, and possible organizational patterns). Concluding the guide is a list of useful references and addresses. (MN)

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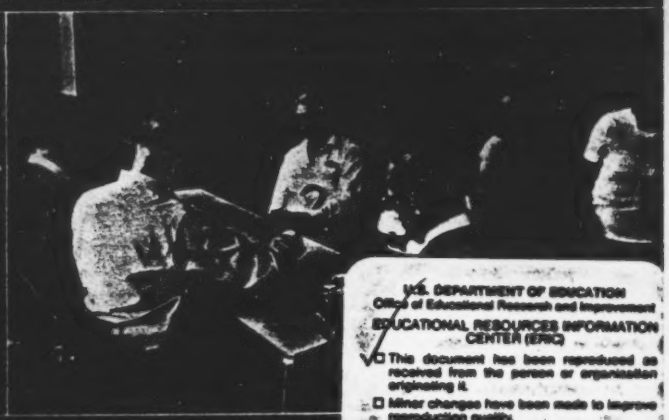
Learning Again

A Guide to Helping Dysphasic Adults with Basic Communication Skills



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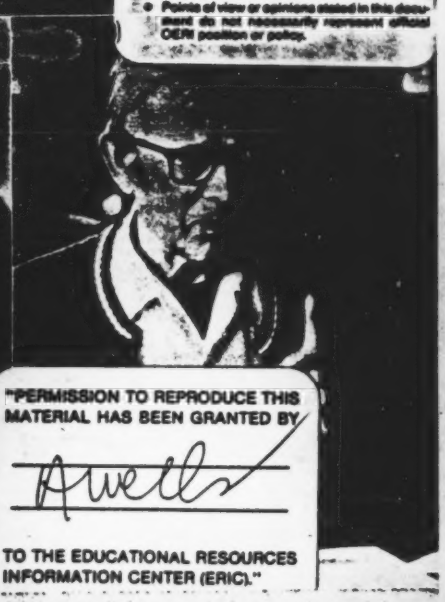

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Foreword

This handbook has been written as a result of a Special Development Project funded by ALBSU and run jointly by Essex County Council Education Department and the Essex Area Health Authority. The project studied the educational needs of adults who had lost some of their literacy and communication skills as a result of stroke or accidents. The project workers were an experienced Speech Therapist and an experienced Basic Education Tutor, who shared their skills and knowledge to develop techniques for assessing, and teaching adults with these handicaps.

The project has demonstrated the need for tuition and developed the techniques of offering it. As a result both Education and Health Authorities have committed resources to further development and groups are now operating throughout Essex.

As a former Chairman of Essex Education Committee and as Chairman of Essex Area Health Authority when the project was undertaken I am particularly pleased to see such a successful demonstration of the possibilities of collaboration between the two services. I am also pleased that ALBSU have recognised the value of the work by agreeing to publish this very practical guide for Authorities considering developing provision. I would commend it to all workers in Education and Health services, who are concerned to improve the quality of life of stroke victims and people who have suffered similar brain damage.

DAME ELIZABETH COKER D.B.E. D.L.

Learning Again

A Guide to Helping Dysphasic Adults with Basic Communication Skills

ALBSU
Adult Literacy & Basic Skills Unit

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Published June 1984

ISBN 0 906509 43 2

Design: Studio 21

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This section attempts to explain to the lay person what dysphasia is, why it happens, and some of the effects it has, particularly on an individual's ability to communicate effectively.

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Initial

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Prognosis

This section looks at ways of finding out about a dysphasic adult's level of functioning, specifically in the areas of Understanding, Speech, Reading and Writing. It also examines the need to record such findings and how to make effective plans for tuition.

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This section follows the assessment plan in looking in general terms at Understanding, Speech, Reading and Writing.

Case Studies and Teaching Strategies 27

Jim

Harold

Susan

Ernie

Some materials

The students introduced in the Assessment section are here used to illustrate specific teaching points under the headings Understanding What is Said, Speech, Reading, Writing. Practical suggestions and ideas are put forward to help the tutor and some real examples are provided.

Useful Materials 48

This section consists of a list of books and materials that tutors have found useful in this field.

An Example of Provision 51

This section looks at the Essex experience with particular regard to the details of setting up provision. It examines the liaison necessary, ways of finding and using helpers, the training they require, the recruitment of students, the difficulty of finding appropriate transport and premises and some possible organisational patterns.

Useful Information and Addresses **Inside Back Cover**

Introduction

This book is intended for those who are attempting to help adults relearn communication skills lost through stroke or accident. It is based on lessons learned during the Essex project but the writers are aware of much excellent work done in this field throughout the country. They are indebted to many workers who freely shared their skills and knowledge.

Essex was fortunate to have the opportunity of paying a Speech Therapist and Adult Basic Education tutor to work closely together for 18 months. Funds for such collaboration are scarce but it is felt that many of the ideas put forward in this book may be useful to lay people tackling problems individually as well as to highly trained professionals working in teams in hospitals and colleges. For convenience dysphasia is looked at under discrete headings of Understanding/Speech/Reading/Writing but these are at all times seen as part of the whole communication process.

The convention of referring to students as 'he' and tutors as 'she' has been adopted, partly since this reflects the true balance in the scheme on which the information is based. Where 'tutors' are referred to they may be relatives or friends of the dysphasic student, volunteer helpers, paid tutors in colleges or Adult Education Institutes or speech therapists in a hospital setting.

"Learning Again" was written by a group of practitioners who were involved in the project during its period of sponsorship and who continue to be involved in the development of basic education provision for dysphasic adults within the Essex Adult Education Service:

Sue Abell, Senior Advisory Tutor

Eileen Mountenay, Basic Education Assistant

Eileen Saunders, Literacy Tutor

Marian Ward, Speech Therapist, Essex Area Health Authority

Elizabeth Waugh, Course Tutor, Tops Preparatory Course

Dysphasia and Dysphasics

Dysphasia may be an unfamiliar term, but you may well have known or tried to help someone suffering from this condition. A dysphasic adult has received damage to the areas of his brain that control speech and language, resulting in some kind of breakdown in the ability to communicate.

As a handicap it is not as widespread or as readily understood, perhaps, as deafness or cerebral palsy, but its effects can be equally traumatic and limiting, and every year hundreds more adults experience this frustrating and sometimes catastrophic disability.

Dysphasia is as complex as communication itself in that no two dysphasic adults are exactly alike. Many skills are involved in communication and any or all of them may be affected in varying degrees.

Dysphasia affects:

- ☐ the underlying natural language functions that develop from infancy: understanding speech, acquiring vocabulary, formulating sentences, articulating sounds.
- ☐ the skills gained through formal education: reading, writing, numeracy.
- ☐ the way we as humans use language in many different ways: emotional, rational, interpersonal, internal.

Dysphasia: Causes and Effects

Dysphasia then, is an impairment of a fundamental intellectual process: language, but caused by physical damage. This physical damage can be from a variety of causes:

Stroke Illness (also known as cerebrovascular accident or apoplexy). This is the commonest cause. Most of the students that you help will have had strokes. A stroke is often accompanied by other physical problems, such a paralysis of limbs, (see Associated Difficulties). The incidence of stroke increases with age and therefore most of your students who have had strokes will be aged 60 or more.

Tumours Growths in the brain can press on or destroy language areas and operations to remove such growths can cause similar damage.

Trauma e.g. war wounds, road-traffic accidents.

Infections e.g. meningitis. Not commonly met with.

Meeting the Students

The student sketches that follow illustrate some of these causes.

Jim — was a 56 year old factory worker who had a benign brain tumour removed. After surgery he had initial problems in eating and walking. He remained confined largely to a wheelchair, and his right hand and arm were useless. He was also dysphasic. His understanding of English was slow at first, but rapidly improved, his main difficulty being in expressing himself. Words came very haltingly and with many wrong sounds; he was at first unable to construct sentences at all. His writing presented similar problems — he used his unaffected hand, but could not remember how to spell words or construct them into sentences. Writing later developed such that it was often easier for him to write a word rather than say it.

Harold — was a 39 year old shop manager with a medical history of high blood pressure, who suffered a cerebral haemorrhage (a type of stroke). His right leg was temporarily paralysed but he was soon able to walk again. His right arm had not recovered any function a year after the stroke. His dysphasia was fairly mild as far as oral skills were concerned; he could understand almost normally, and could express himself in complete sentences with a few difficulties in finding the right words. His articulation of sounds was rather indistinct owing to paralysis of the right side of the face. Reading and writing were worse affected; he could not retain more than two or three sentences on reading, and he could initially not write much more than single words and a few simple phrases.

Susan — was a 54 year old teacher who sustained head injuries after falling off a ladder. Physically she regained the use of her legs so as to be able to walk with a stick, but her right hand and arm remained weak. She was also dysphasic. She could talk in long, fluently constructed sentences which tended to lack concrete information-carrying words and which were rather repetitive and stereotyped at times. She frequently needed information to be repeated before she could fully grasp the subject. Her literacy skills were initially almost completely lost, compounded by visual difficulties, in that she had lost the right half of the field of vision in each eye.

Ernie — was a 73 year old retired accountant who had a brain thrombosis (a type of stroke). After a short period in hospital he was able to return home, physically fit, and with no limb weakness, but with a severe dysphasia. At first he had great difficulty in understanding radio, TV, and other people talking. This gradually improved. His own speech was very fast and copious, but tended to sound like jumbled nonsense with the obvious wrong word choice and also some neologisms (words used in a wrong context or new words that look familiar but are meaningless). However, he had a clear idea of what he wanted to say. He was not confused mentally, although his speech might give rise to such an impression, especially since he had no obvious physical disability.

Types of Dysphasia

From the above sketches it is clear that dysphasic adults share similar problems, but that the overall pattern of difficulties can vary. It has long been the practice to divide dysphasia into broad categories which reflect particular patterns. It is not intended to describe these types in detail here but merely to mention the commonest terms that you are almost certain to meet if you are involved with dysphasic adults for any length of time.

Jim and Harold both had a *non-fluent dysphasia*, also known as *Broca's* or *expressive* dysphasia. This is characterised by awkward articulation of sounds and restricted vocabulary and grammar. In severe cases, the person may be able to say nothing spontaneously, and may even have difficulty repeating words and sounds. On the other hand, understanding of the spoken word is generally much better than language output would imply. Literacy skills tend to follow the same pattern i.e. reading is less impaired than writing and spelling. The non-fluent dysphasic is the commonest type you will meet. If the cause of the dysphasia has been a stroke, then it is also more likely that there will be an accompanying paralysis of the right arm and right side of the face.

Susan and Ernie both had *fluent* dysphasia also described as *Wernicke's* or *receptive* dysphasia. This is not as commonly met with as non-fluent dysphasia. Language is characterised by fairly fluently articulated speech, often with sentences of normal length and grammar but with difficulty in recalling specific nouns or verbs. Comprehension of the spoken word may range from normal to severely impaired, and the more impairment, the more the language output tends to sound like fluent jibberish or jargon. The fluent dysphasic often has no residual physical weakness after a stroke.

Associated Disabilities

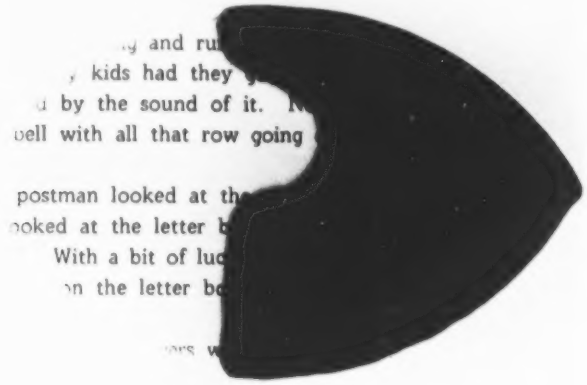
Since dysphasic adults are brain damaged they may have additional disabilities which need to be considered in planning effective tuition. In this section are mentioned terms which you may meet if you read about dysphasia or talk to doctors or therapists.

□ *Physical*

Damage to the brain can affect control of body movements. Those dysphasics who have had strokes, frequently have a hemiplegia (paralysis) affecting the right arm and leg and the right side of the face. Anyone who has brain damage as an adult is at risk of developing epilepsy.

□ *Visual*

Damage to the nerves concerned with vision can lead to loss of part of the visual field, or tunnel vision. For example, you may find that your student ignores the right hand side of the page when reading.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□ *Dysarthria*

Mainly found after a stroke, this simply means a difficulty in controlling the muscles involved in eating and speaking. It is similar to the difficulty that someone with cerebral palsy might have in trying to talk. The student may dribble, or have very slurred and indistinct speech.

□ *Dyspraxia*

This difficulty in remembering how to articulate and sequence speech sounds, even though the muscles involved in speech are strong enough to work normally, can affect spoken language very markedly. The student may appear to be struggling or groping to articulate the correct sound.

□ *Concentration*

Attention span may be reduced, as may auditory and visual memories.

□ *Emotional lability*

Uncontrollable outbursts of crying or laughing which seem to have no apparent cause. Many dysphasic adults are, not surprisingly, in a state of great shock and depression for many months after their stroke.

Dysphasia: Lost Literacy

The dysphasic student in some ways resembles other groups of basic education students who have special needs: dyslexics, slow learners, the physically and mentally handicapped. Whereas most students are reaching out to acquire new skills and expand their opportunities, however, dysphasic adults start with the psychological disadvantage of loss. Someone who has had a bad stroke will have had to make enormous social, emotional and sometimes economic adjustments and role changes. Loss of work, loss of self-esteem, communicative frustration, physical handicap, strained marital relationships — all these are potential negative factors that can add to the dysphasic adult's task of trying to regain language skills. It is obviously necessary to see the student as a whole person, and not just as dysphasic. Similarly, motivation to improve is as important for these students as any other, and support from family or friends may be critical in maintaining such motivation.

On the positive side, the dysphasic student often brings a wealth of knowledge and interests to his literacy work that makes the shared task more rewarding. The dysphasic student may be at a loss for words, but not opinions.

Diana Law, the president of Action for Dysphasic Adults, is herself dysphasic, and had this to relate about the early days after her stroke.

> *"I could not speak, although my tongue worked perfectly well, and I knew what I wanted to say; I could not always fully understand what people said to me although I was not the slightest deaf; I could not read although I could see the words quite clearly on the page – they just had not meaning; I could not write although I had learnt to use a pencil with my left hand – I could in fact copy writing quite beautifully; as with my speech, I knew what I wanted to write, but I could not find the words, and even when I could, I could not spell them".*
>
> (from "Living after a Stroke", by Diane Law and Barbara Paterson, Souvenir Press Ltd.)

Dysphasia: Help Available

It is difficult to give an introduction to dysphasia without seeming to make the problems insurmountable. It is true that dysphasia is a very handicapping and long term disability, but the very great increase in help, support, and publicity for dysphasics over the past ten years shows that those involved in rehabilitation and re-education, and the dysphasic adults and their families, believe that there are worthwhile and realistic goals to be achieved, and that we must carry on trying to expand our knowledge and expertise in this field.

Current help is available from:-

- speech therapy in hospitals, clinics and speech clubs, offering group and individual therapy including literacy skills where appropriate; assessment; family counselling
- a variety of schemes, some within the National Health Service, such as the Volunteer Stroke Scheme; the Red Cross home visitor scheme; social stroke clubs, and speech clubs. Two organisations that are much involved in this field are the Chest Heart and Stroke Association and Action for Dysphasic Adults (see inside back cover). Volunteers play a crucial role in most of these
- education. This has been the most recent development. Initiatives include social stroke clubs, evening classes staffed by speech therapists, and most recently of all, basic education classes designed specifically for dysphasics.

It is very worthwhile finding out what is available in your locality and making contact with those involved.

Assessment

Whatever form of provision you foresee for dysphasic students, assessment of their abilities, needs, and wishes is very important. The fact of someone's having dysphasia tells you very little about their specific language weaknesses, strengths and interests.

Assessment can be seen, of course, as an ongoing process, but it is necessary to set goals and start work at the right level, from the start. Assessment also gives some measure of how far goals have been achieved after a certain period of time. Using a similar assessment for each student also enables him to be placed more effectively for group work.

The first point to elucidate is whether the prospective student is, in fact, dysphasic. If the student has been made known to you by someone working in the medical field then a diagnosis will probably be available. If a speech therapist has referred the student then he or she should be able to provide you with a detailed assessment and some idea of previous therapy. However, you may be approached for help by someone as yet unassessed or who is unknown to medical workers. This booklet will help you in deciding whether the person's problems are dysphasic in nature, but you might also wish or need to ask for further help from a speech therapist. This will be easy if you are working jointly on providing tuition.

There are many assessments and screening tests available to help decide on the type and severity of dysphasia present. The tests are often lengthy because they are so comprehensive in nature. Most assess the following areas:

understanding
- of the spoken word
- of gestures
- of reading

speech and language
- repetition of sounds and words
- automatic and overlearned sequences — e.g. saying alphabet
- spontaneous speech — length, fluency, vocabulary, grammar, etc.

writing

use of gesture

These assessments are intended for use by trained speech therapists, doctors, psychologists, etc., and as such, are not suitable for immediate application by basic education tutors. If you are working with a speech therapist then you may be able to have one of the assessments explained, observe it being carried out, and perhaps help administer some of the sections yourself, specifically those pertaining to reading and writing. If no help is available then you can use the areas given above as a basis for a checklist or profile of your own devising. It was decided in Essex to devise such an assessment rather than use the rather cumbersome tests already available to the speech therapist.

Initial Assessment

This is probably the first opportunity that the tutor-organiser and the prospective student have of meeting. It is best if it can take place where the student is going to feel most at ease — probably at home, (wherever home is — it might be in a nursing home or long-stay ward). You will be able to assess the student's general communication in a functional setting, perhaps meeting relatives, friends or staff, who will be important in maintaining future motivation, and who can often provide helpful details about work, hobbies, health, etc. that the potential student may be unable to provide because of speech difficulties. These points can form part of the initial assessment:

- ☐ whether the dysphasic adult enjoys listening to radio, TV and finds any difficulty understanding them.
- ☐ whether he likes meeting friends and relatives still, and goes out to any groups, etc.
- ☐ how he communicates with others: speech, gestures, pointing, intonation, writing.
- ☐ what reading and writing are done now and what was done, before the illness.
- ☐ whether he is aiming to get back to work or whether he is retired. This is very important as communication work can obviously be linked up with the skills necessary to go back to former employment (You also have to be realistic: he might *want* to go back to work but you can't conspire to raise unrealistic aspirations; on the other hand you need to encourage the student!)

From this initial assessment the tutor and/or speech therapist will gain some idea of the student's suitability for inclusion in provision. He needs sufficient motivation and interest and should not be too confused or depressed (although depression is very often helped by attending provision, especially a group). Depending on the other students in the class you may also wish him to have a certain level of verbal comprehension (understanding of the spoken word). You may want to start with a certain period of home tuition before finally deciding, and of course, the student will also be making up his mind about whether he wants to accept further tuition.

Formal Assessment

Once work starts with the student, then one can begin to assess in more depth. The *Communication Assessment* (p. 14) is an example of a simple rating scale that could be used, based on the areas discussed earlier. This was devised in Essex by the speech therapists and adult education tutors to replace the more formal speech therapy assessments. It is similar to many scales and profiles used in the past with dyphasics. It does not have to be completed after one class or meeting, but rather over a period of weeks. During this time, one can build up knowledge of, and confidence with, the student so that he does not feel he is being tested, although he may of course be interested to see any assessment carried out. The assessment should be filled in by the speech therapist or basic education class organiser, or by the volunteer tutor working in conjunction with them. This helps to ensure maximum objectivity and uses the experience of those who have more knowledge of dysphasic adults, and of assessing them.

The *Communication Assessment* deals with 5 areas: understanding the spoken word, speech, reading and writing — and also attitude, an area which may improve more than anything else. Attitude comprises both motivation and social skills.

It is important to consider the students in the light of each of these areas, and one may also want to check on their abilities with money, time and arithmetic, especially if this is relevant to their work.

Using the Communication Assessment

Simply rate the student on each area according to how he performs on the six-point scale. Devise specific lessons and tasks of your own choice in order to do this. For example, just talking to the student, over coffee, in the group, and in one-to-one situations will give you a clear idea of how to rate speech.

Using a Checklist

The *Checklist* (p. 16) gives suggestions as to tasks and skills you can check on for each area and at each level of the *Communication Assessment*. As such it will supply you with graded teaching ideas as well as further assessment material. The checklist was devised in Essex by the project workers to complement the *Communication Assessment*, and can be used in conjunction with it. If a student, for example, is at level 3 in *Reading*, then consulting level 3 of reading on the checklist will give teaching ideas suitable for this level, and points for further assessment. You may also want to elaborate some areas of the *Communication Assessment* e.g. speech. As well as rating from 0-6 on the scale it is helpful to tape or jot down some of the student's spontaneous language and analyse it further e.g.

- ☐ intelligibility; difficulty with specific sounds or blends
- ☐ sentence length
- ☐ speed

- ☐ nouns, verbs, adjectives — many? few? appropriate? made-up words present?
- ☐ any conjunctions, prepositions, auxiliaries present?
- ☐ are there any repetitive or stereotyped phrases?

You may see a fluent or non-fluent (see page 8) speech pattern emerging. This sort of analysis is very valuable when you compare after a year or so to see if the student's speech has improved.

The student's self-assessment

Part of assessment is a clear idea of the student's own ideas and goals. How does he rate his abilities in each area now? What would he like to work on? This is initially one of the most delicate and difficult parts of assessment, partly because of language difficulties, but also because it can be upsetting for the student to compare his past skills with his present performance.

It cannot be omitted, however, for it enables the student to participate more actively in setting teaching goals, and increases his responsibility. This may be a new concept for him, and it may take him some time to come to terms with it. It can also be hard for dysphasic students to think of concrete tasks leading up to general hopes of "improving reading". Again the tutor-organiser and speech therapist can devise their own methods/assessments for this. An example of the student plan devised in Essex is on page 20.

Ongoing and re-assessment

If you keep some sort of checklist such as the one in this book, then you are in effect carrying out on-going assessment. An evaluation of each class or lesson in the form of record keeping also fulfils the aim of on-going assessment. A profile such as the *Communication Assessment* carried out once or twice a year will give an idea of how much improvement is taking place. A definite deterioration in one or more areas should also be noted, because it may be the sign of further brain damage e.g. further small strokes.

How much improvement is likely

Most improvement takes place in the year following the brain injury. If you start helping a dysphasic student very shortly after his illness, then you may be amazed at how much "spontaneous recovery" can occur, e.g. writing may improve from writing single words to composing a letter to friends, over a period of a few weeks. After the year, gains are likely to be smaller and slower. Unequal gains may be made in different areas e.g. speech may improve much more than writing and vice versa. This is no doubt due to the actual parts of the brain most affected.

The student's self-assessment should also be given at regular intervals e.g. every term, or with a change of tutor, so that one can be sure that tuition is continuing to fulfil the student's aims. Equally valuable are the student's own perceptions of what aspect they have improved in and to what degree. For instance, a student may rate his improved confidence far more highly than the tutor would have done. Sometimes the students may seem unduly critical of any achievements. This will be because they are comparing their level of literacy and oral skills with the period *before* they were dysphasic.

Points to remember when assessing

These are all applicable to teaching as well.

You need to provide
- — a quiet well-lit room
- — comfortable seating with provision for fixing writing paper securely
- — large clear materials.

Check on
- — hearing aids and glasses if worn. Perceptual tasks e.g. matching pictures, shapes, words, will help you to see if the student has visual field or perceptual problems
- — whether the student uses an alternative system of communication e.g. Makaton sign language, Canon Communicator.

Make sure

— your own speech is clear and unhurried

— that the student has plenty of time to listen, assimilate, and reply. Do not step in too soon with the right word

— that you admit if you have completely misunderstood the student.

Useful materials

- ☐ clipboards, blu-tak, dycem non-slip mats, a variety of paper and writing materials.
- ☐ lots of pictures, for
  - — matching
  - — sequencing
  - — naming and description (both in speech and writing).
- ☐ words and sentences to accompany pictures, for labelling and reading work
- ☐ tapes of familiar sounds and simple instructions
- ☐ letter tiles
- ☐ selection of reading materials, ranging in length from one sentence to books
- ☐ variety of everyday objects, for aural comprehension work
- ☐ real-life materials — coins, clock, magazines, maps, directories, forms, TV guides, calendar, labels from goods and notices.

COMMUNICATION ASSESSMENT

NAME .....

DATE .....

Rating Scale: 0-6 according to the following guide.
Scoring: Circle most appropriate number, with arrow up or down if between levels.
Add brief comment if necessary.

ATTITUDE TO PEOPLE/SITUATIONS

0 Makes no apparent effort .....

1 Limited interest .....

2 Allows himself to be inhibited by language difficulties .....

3 Listens with interest but rarely contributes .....

4 Listens effectively and responds .....

5 Initiates communication and mixes well with others .....

6 Normal/as before illness .....

UNDERSTANDING WHAT IS SAID

0 Seems to understand very little, not even single words .....

1 Grasps single words and simple sentences, but needs gesture, facial expression and repetition too .....

2 Follows short simple sentences and conversation, if at slow speed and with some repetition .....

3 Appropriate responses to most utterances, although at times fails to grasp major points .....

4 Understands ordinary speech at normal speed with few problems .....

5 Can listen to complex speech, radio, TV, and fast conversation with only an occasional problem .....

6 Normal/as before illness .....

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE

0 No useful or intelligible speech — only meaningless sounds or streams of jargon utterances

1 Has a small vocabulary of words and sounds for basic communication but the main burden of communication lies with listener

2 Can use single words and phrases especially social/stereotyped language

3 Wider vocabulary and some sentences used, but problems still very apparent as attempts made to increase length or complexity of message

4 Able to express wishes and feelings more fully and participate in conversation, but frequent hesitation, mistakes and word-finding difficulties, increasing in proportion to complexity of message

5 Speech and language virtually normal: only slight occasional problems with word-finding, pronunciation, grammar, etc.

6 Normal/as before illness

READING FOR UNDERSTANDING

0 Cannot understand written words, may not even be able to match letters or shapes

1 Matches some single words to pictures; can read some common words e.g. social sight vocabulary

2 Reads many single words and matches them to pictures; understands short simple phrases and sentences

3 Can read longer, more complex sentences and short simple paragraphs; can show understanding by completing multiple choice exercises

4 Can read longer/more complex texts and materials e.g. short magazine article; letters from relatives

5 Can read almost as well as before illness; may have difficulty retaining ideas from longer stretches of text

6 Normal/as before illness

WRITING

Which hand used now? R. L. Which before illness? R. L.

0 Cannot write; may be unable to copy letters or shapes

1 Can copy and write a few words such as name

2 Has a vocabulary of single words and short phrases, either to dictation or spontaneously

3 Spelling and sentence formulation improving for phrases and short simple sentences, fewer prompts needed

4 Achieves a measure of functional writing, e.g. notes, shopping lists, but difficulties in expressing long or complex ideas

5 Can cope independently with everyday tasks such as letters with only a few mistakes in spelling and phrasing

6 Normal/as before illness

RATING	
ATTITUDE TO PEOPLE	( )
UNDERSTANDING	( )
SPEECH	( )
READING	( )
WRITING	( )

CHECKLIST

ATTITUDE TO PEOPLE/SITUATIONS

0 Tutor enlists home support

Tutor and student discuss alternatives to class tuition

One to one tuition

1 Class outings

Tutor presents topics of interest

Student brings in something to class e.g. holiday photos

2 Practising home/other situations in class i.e. meal situations, shopping etc

Student takes responsibility for small part of class running

3 Role play — parts requiring initiation of conversation

Students working in pairs

4 Talking to strangers in controlled environment

Participation in larger groups

5 Practising telephone skills

Practising assignments outside class

Organising and taking part in discussions

6 Sharing responsibility for class organisation

UNDERSTANDING WHAT IS SAID

0 Tutor uses gestures when talking to student

Matching non-speech sound with pictures/objects

Listening to well-known songs/music

Matching pictures or objects with a one element "sentence" e.g. "running"

Questions requiring yes/no response

Understanding short realistic requests e.g. where are your glasses? Gesture or picture to reinforce

1 Repeating words;; numbers and sounds, to improve aural memory

Understanding 2, 3, 4 concept commands, e.g. Give me a pen, paper and stamp

Yes/no response — questions are longer and more complex e.g. "20 Questions" game

Matching pictures with two element sentence e.g. where's the green car?

Following short requests as in (0), tutor gradually decreases number of repeats

2 Selection of picture from descriptive sentence

Following complex real life requests

Following a sequenced picture story from sentences read aloud

Listening to short (3 or 4 sentences) paragraphs — answering yes/no questions

Encouraging small group conversation

3 Repeating sentences, retelling paragraphs to aid aural memory

Following conversation in larger groups as in class

Listening to tapes materials, e.g. simple short radio/TV, then answering questions

4 Graded aural material, e.g. answering questions on taped stories that increase in speed and length

5 Expanding use of understanding TV/radio (discussions etc) — response depends on students' ability to express themselves orally/in writing

SPEECH (sounds, vocabulary, sentence-structure, content). At all levels, reinforce with written word and/or gesture as necessary.

0 Communication through signing system e.g. Amerind, Makaton

Singing well-known songs

Practising well-known sequences e.g. numbers, days of the week

Verbal cloze e.g. You sleep in a ———

Saying name

Key words for ease of communication, e.g. drink, toilet

Indicating yes/no reliably

1 Specific sounds e.g. initial letter sound. Link up with letter of alphabet

Picture/object naming — building up a vocabulary of nouns and verbs

Names of relatives/friends

Forced alternatives, i.e. Is this a cup or a glass?

Name and address

Imitation of single sounds — tactile auditory and visual cues

2 Expanding short phrases to include function words i.e. articles, prepositions, tenses

Picture etc. description to build up two element utterances e.g. noun and verb; adjective and noun; verb and adverb

Quizzes requiring one or two word answers

Role play e.g. paying fare, asking time

Building up vocabulary around a specific real-life situation, e.g. mealtime, shopping

3 Expanding telegraphic sentences and newspaper headlines

Role play, e.g. asking directions, buying dress etc

Practising sequences of sounds

Shadow reading to increase fluency

Play reading to encourage feel of fluency

4 Retelling story in own words

Complex picture description

Collecting vocabulary of situations causing difficulty

Poetry reading

Pronunciation of polysyllabic words

Prepared talks

5 Group prediction exercise

Group poetry

Complex role play — e.g. interviews

Vocabulary building e.g. synonyms

6 Practise real life assignments to increase confidence

Running group activities at class

Using telephone confidently

Organising and taking part in discussions etc

READING FOR UNDERSTANDING

0 Picking out similar letters and words

Word jigsaws

Cue words with pictures

1 Social sight vocabulary

Use of language master

Categorizing

Ordering words alphabetically

Predicting ends of words from beginnings

Matching written words with oral words

Shadow reading (tutor and student reading at same time)

Language experience method

Matching pictures with words

2 Simple dictionaries

Key words (Dolch list) in context

Headline/photo matching

True or false exercises

Jumbled sentences

3 Edited newspaper material

Catalogues

Comprehension exercises

Map reading

Train timetables

4 Telephone book

Short books

Newspapers

Magazines

Official letters

5 Reading for pleasure

Ordinary dictionaries

Holiday brochures

Complicated forms

6 Specialised reading

Collating information

WRITING

0 Drawing shapes

Name

Signature

Tracing

Copying

Finger tracing — Writing (Fernald)

Numbers

Pictures as cues

Note: Does reading accompany the writing?

1 Address

Alphabet, upper and lower case letters

Joined up writing coupled with practising spelling

Writing automatically (recalled flow)

Beginning phonic work

Shopping lists

2 Form filling

Phonic work

Captions for photos

Cloze exercise

Spelling practice, various methods

Learning important words

Keeping own dictionary

Short notes (milkman, etc)

Postcards

3 Picture descriptions

Building sentences around a given word or words

Finishing off sentences

Sending for items in mail order catalogues

Telephone messages

Comprehension work

Use of dictionary

4 Correction of own writing

Diary

Dictation

Punctuation

Written directions

Grammar exercises

Project work

Planned writing

5 Variety of letters

Writing for pleasure

Report writing

Vocabulary development

Summaries

6 Skills practice

Use of writing skills as support for impaired speech

STUDENT'S PLAN

NAME:

DATE:

OCCUPATION:

OTHER MAIN INTEREST(S):

READING
background

present:

aims:

WRITING:
background:

present:

aims:

SPEECH:
background:

present:

aims:

NUMBERS:
background:

present:

aims:

RELATIVES' SUGGESTIONS:

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS RELATED TO STUDENT'S PLAN

These questions are intended as starting points for tutors when they are helping students plan for classwork. Use them as seems appropriate. Answers should be taken down as notes under the different headings.

READING:

background: Was reading part of your job? Did you enjoy reading? What sort of books, magazines, newspapers etc? Was it important to you?

present: What do you read now?

aims: Do you want to read more? What books, papers, etc? Or particular subjects? Are there any specific tasks involving reading you want to improve on?

WRITING:

background: Was writing part of your job? Did you write letters to relatives and friends? Notes and household affairs? Did you write for pleasure?

present: Do you do any writing now? Any household writing?

aims: Do you want to write more? Work on spelling or writing as classwork? Specific writing tasks you want to try? Cheques, letters, notes?

SPEECH:

background: Was speaking part of your job? Would you describe yourself as a talkative person? Did you enjoy discussions, debates, social occasions?

present: To what degree can you get across what you want? Does your speech vary according to situation? Do you feel frustrated by your speech? Do you go out much? On your own? Use public transport? Shopping?

aims: Are there any speaking situations you would like to practise?

NUMBERS:

background: Was using numbers part of your job? Everyday life?

present: Do you have trouble with numbers? Time?

aims: Is there any kind of number work you'd particularly like to practise?

By using assessment to understand a student's needs and discussion to get to know his own goals, the tutor can develop teaching aims and lesson plans. After discussion of general points concerning understanding, speech, reading and writing, suggestions for teaching approaches in specific situations will be described in the case studies which follow. The activities discussed and others suggested in the Checklist can take their place with activities of your own devising in a planned programme of work that has continuity from week to week. The activities here are presented in ways particularly useful to people like the students described but they can be adapted to suit the aims and needs of others. Some of the activities are more suitable for group work and some for individual work but many could be used in both situations, if members of the groups have common interests or problems. The pace of working is likely to be slow so that each aspect of the task takes longer than you might expect. Your planning might anticipate developing a theme over several weeks, especially in individual tuition, though a variety of approaches would be particularly important to avoid boredom.

It is useful to plan under separate aspects of communication — Understanding what is said, Speech, Reading for Understanding, Writing — so that activities are not repetitious and do not neglect important areas of need. While these headings serve to focus our attention, it must be kept in mind that they are but aspects of a whole language — and as such inseparable and interdependent. Improvement in any of these four areas will be likely to result in a more positive attitude and increased social confidence. Specific ways of encouraging participation are listed in the Checklist under Attitude.

General Points — Understanding and Speech

Consideration of both skills of understanding and producing speech is crucial whether working in a group or individual situation with dysphasic students. If the student has significant impairment in either area then this might be considered to be a valid focus of work in itself whether on a regular or intermittent basis. With most dysphasic adults, oral and aural skills have a close relationship with literacy skills and can interweave with them in a way supportive to both.

Understanding What is Said

This is also referred to as auditory or verbal comprehension, to distinguish it from reading comprehension, which is a totally different skill. The *Communication Assessment* and *Checklist* have highlighted the ways in which this skill can be affected. Severe difficulties in understanding will almost inevitably produce disruptions in speech output. Conversely good understanding of speech can co-exist with very sparse language output.

If the student's comprehension is at a level corresponding to 5 or 6 on the *Communication Assessment*, then he will probably be in little need of specific work on this area, since daily life with conversation, radio and TV will be constantly exercising this skill. However, he may well enjoy the stimulus of discussion and quizzes at class, if he hears little conversation at home. For students who are below level 5 as regards comprehension, then the ideas outlined in the Checklist levels 0-4 suggest the sort of activities that can be helpful, whether in the group or one to one situation. The idea of working on understanding may seem a little strange, but it can provide very effective and enjoyable activities. Examples of these are given with each student.

It is important to remember that group activities are often more difficult for those with comprehension problems. The group may be running at a pace that is just too fast for them to grasp, and there is often not as much time to repeat instructions and sentences as there would be in a one to one situation.

You may decide then that for some activities, it might be better to group the students according to their level of verbal comprehension.

Ways of Helping

How much dysphasic students may understand depends on their own level of comprehension and also:

- ☐ length and rate of message
- ☐ content i.e. concrete or abstract. (Concrete is generally easier)
- ☐ presence or absence of emphasis and intonations
- ☐ visual "non-verbal" cues i.e. gestures, facial expressions, eye or finger pointing; written word.

Using these factors can help your dysphasic students to understand you better. It will often be helpful to:

- ☐ repeat in shorter sentences
- ☐ repeat more slowly, with breaks after groups of meaningful words. Ensure the student is listening and looking before you speak
- ☐ rephrase the message: hearing something explained in different ways may help
- ☐ make sure you use appropriate facial expression and intonation. It may be necessary to speak more loudly if in a noisy room or if the student has hearing problems
- ☐ use gestures; write down key words; allow the student to see your face, as 'lip-reading' may be an aid to 'decoding' the auditory message. If you can, use a formal sign system if your student does e.g. *Amerind, Makaton.*

Speech and Language

We mean many things when we talk about speech, not just the physical uttering of sounds that the term 'speech' implies. It is better to think of this area as 'language'. A brief discussion of what language involves is given here, and activities relating to each level will be found with student profiles later.

Loss of spoken language is often the most frustrating and obvious part of dysphasia. One of its *most* frustrating aspects is that it varies in a very unpredictable way. For instance your student may wish to say he lives in a *bungalow*. He may be unable to say the word on that particular occasion, but the word is not lost to him forever. He may be helped to say it by hearing the "b" at the start, or by seeing part of the word written down, or by seeing a picture. Access to the word is lost, rather than the word itself.

Language comprises the following levels:

Articulation — pronunciation of the individual sounds that make up English by using voice box, tongue, lips, in co-ordination with breathing. This can be affected in the two ways mentioned on p. 9 ("Associated Disabilities").

(a) *Dysarthria:* Poor enunciation due to muscle weakness. It is obvious that muscles are paralysed. There may be dribbling and eating problems.

(b) *Dyspraxia:* The muscles are adequate for pronunciation, but the patterns of movement needed for articulating and sequencing sounds have been forgotten. The more complex the word, the greater the difficulty.

Vocabulary — the store of words, verbs, nouns, etc., that we hold in our brain, and that we join together appropriately to form sentences. All dysphasic students are likely to have some reduction in their vocabulary. They may be unable to think of a word at all e.g. bungalow, or they may substitute a similar word e.g. house. Trying to build up vocabulary is an important area and one that is often more worthwhile than that of articulation where one may put in a great deal of effort and for very little improvement.

Sentences — the third and most complex level of speech. Most students need help on producing longer or more complex sentences. Most students will find it easier to produce stereotyped sentences such as "I'm very well today, thank you", rather than an original sentence such as "I'm going to the hairdresser's on Tuesday." However, both kinds of sentence are important in social communication, and it is worthwhile working on both. Basically, one is attempting, at this level, to help students regain their grammar. Improving the word-finding level is obviously important too, in helping build up sentence structure, but one also needs to consider aspects of grammar e.g.

- How to make different sentence types — questions, commands, increasing the average length of the sentence. This depends partly on short-term memory.
- Parts of speech. Dysphasics may have particular difficulty with *prepositions, articles, conjunctions.*
- *Plurals, possessives, past tense* — all those aspects of grammar that are marked by *affixes.*

Both spontaneous conversation and structured work have been shown to be helpful in redeveloping grammar, and there are many text-books, picture materials and schemes which are appropriate.

Alternative systems of Communication

Rather than just telling your student a word, you should encourage him to get his meaning across by whatever means he can, rather than just giving up because the speech modality has failed. Drawing, pointing, writing and gesture are other valid *modalities* or channels of communication. Many dysphasic adults have found that gesture in particular can be a useful alternative to speech, although are often prejudices in themselves — and others — that make accepting signing a difficult step to take. Two sign systems in particular are used with dysphasics at present:

Amerind. This is an adaptation of the gestural code used by North American Indians for hundreds of years. It is based on very concrete picturable gestures and therefore lends itself very well to the needs of dysphasic students.

Makaton. This signing vocubulary, adapted from British sign language for the deaf, is very widely known and used now, particulary with the mentally handicapped. It is probably not quite as easy to learn as Amerind, but has the advantage of being more widely known.

General Points — Reading and Writing

Like speech and understanding, a dysphasic person's reading and writing skills, as aspects of the whole communication network, may also be impaired. The impairment is likely to be selective so that literacy skills may be better or worse than speech, reading better or worse than writing. While lack of coherent speech is often most sorely felt by the student and his family, he will also feel the loss of literacy skills whether he used them in his job or in leisure time activities or whether they were an aspect of his role in the family or community. Even though he may never be able to return to work in his former position, all improvements in literacy help him to take up a position in whatever situation he can and to spend his time in as fulfilling a manner as may be. Also literacy skills can be developed to support the other modes of language so that more communication is achieved through whatever combination of writing, speech or gesture is possible.

There are a number of general purposes for developing facility with reading and writing.

- To cue speech: if a student can write the word, he can then often say it or be helped to say it; or if you know what word he has in mind, you can write it for him to read and then say.
- To take the place of difficult speech.
- To help in word finding: if someone has lists of useful information which preferably he has been helped to make for himself, he can look up the word he wants and point to it or say it.
- To build confidence: independence develops from his being able to produce a written word or list if speech fails.
- To extend speaking skills: working with whole written sentences is useful for pinpointing necessary grammatical structures.

More specific aims for developing reading and writing involve step-by-step approaches for helping a person rebuild a variety of day to day activities.

- A student can work toward regaining his former role in the family by practising basic tasks like cheque-writing, form-filling and the like.
- He can aim at becoming employed, if that is a realistic goal, by working on likely job-related materials.
- He can develop with his tutor strategies for helping memory and concentration so that he can try to read for pleasure again.

- If he is helped to find the right materials or texts, he can work on his own at home on reading and writing exercises and may feel a great sense of satisfaction in spending time usefully.

Reading Material

Once a specific need or interest has been identified, the tutor needs to select from the texts available. Basically these may usefully be considered in four categories.

(i) Those designed specifically for Adult Literacy, or English as a Foreign Language.

(ii) Those which are published for the general public.

(iii) Those taken from either of the above categories which have been adapted or simplified.

(iv) Language Experience texts.

Into the first category fall newspapers published by or for students, abridged books, booklets by student authors, and textbooks aimed at teaching specific reading skills. These form a recognised, though limited source of reading, not necessarily graded, but nevertheless at various levels of difficulty. The usefulness of English as a Foreign Language materials lies in their structured approach to language development. A list of some of these materials can be found in the index.

Forms, magazines, catalogues, dictionaries, directories, books, brochures and newspapers are in the second category. Texts from this source are often immediately relevant to the student but they may be too long or complex for him to read in their original state. However, it should be noted that even within a newspaper, texts at various levels of difficulty are evident. Headlines, for example, are in large, easily readable print. News in brief items, first paragraphs of major news items and cartoons are also a source of short, fairly easily read material.

The third category is made up of texts drawn from either of the previous sources, but which have been adapted to suit the student's level of ability. A text can be simplified by the tutor writing a simpler summary in her own words or by the tutor reading the original to the student, a short section at a time, and both working together to rewrite the text in a more understandable form.

Language experience texts are those which are composed by the student or the student and tutor together, and are then written down by either or both to be used as a source of reading material.

Writing tasks

The majority of students will be concerned to improve in those tasks such as form-filling, writing notes, messages, postcards and letters, which will enable them to take a more active role in the family or community.

Whichever of these tasks is jointly decided upon, the materials and methods of presentation should be as close as possible to the real activity. Thus, short taped conversations may stimulate the writing of simple notes to the family, or the taking of telephone messages. A system of stimulating language experience reading material may be employed here too (who? what? why? where? when? how?) as a means of structuring the way the message is written, and as a memory aid. (See page 34).

Pictures are often a source of stimulus material as they give the student a variety of visual prompts. The tutor may use the student's language and act as a scribe while the student is speaking. Later, the tutor can dictate back the student's words. This method effectively frees the student, firstly, to concentrate on what he wants to say, and secondly, to pay attention to spelling, punctuation, layout and handwriting. Alternatively, the tutor may write out the student's text, sentence by sentence, and encourage the student to cover each word in the sequence, before attempting to write it. This method provides a structured framework in which the student can write and learn a "look, cover, write, check" formula for remembering spellings.

Tapes may be used to:

- compare and contrast tones and qualities of speech, and impressions of personality
- stimulate comment on current affairs
- create impressions through listening to different types of music

and throughout these activities, provide a focus which will lead to written comments.

It is helpful if both students and tutor see much of the writing as drafts to be amended and corrected once the essential meaning has been committed to paper. In this way, errors of all kinds can be put into perspective and dealt with after the initial struggle to convey meaning.

There are many basic English textbooks available which will provide exercises to develop correct English usage but it should be remembered that the student must have ample opportunity to put into practice what he has learned, through a variety of relevant writing assignments. It is vital to date and title writing tasks and to so organise work on the page that it is easy to retrieve information when it is required. Dysphasic students do not always possess the means to structure their work and this process has to be learned.

Spelling

Because the dysphasic student's flow of writing is likely to be impeded or distorted like the flow of speech, he may be unable to write anything fluently, even his name, or he may be able to spell a long word, such as "antiquated" but not a short one, "in". It is worth working hard to build up a core of words which a person can depend on being able to write easily without errors.

For the dysphasic student, learning to spell involves:

Concentration: achieved partly through *motivation*, working on useful words of the right difficulty and partly by *avoiding distractions;* working away from others in a quiet place and arranging the materials to avoid visual clutter.

Practice: Consistent effort to learn one or two words a week and using these words in a variety of contexts.

Review: going back over words seemingly mastered; keeping a record, for example in a personal dictionary in alphabetical order or listed by association of meaning.

Developing a Suitable Method

This presents difficulties which are related to the severity of the learning problems and to the fact that learning behaviour is erratic. What does not work one week, might work the next. It is useful to begin by analysing spelling errors and then identifying possible methods of learning which might work.

A student may have a few or many of the following problems:

1. He may not be able to sound out letters or syllables.
2. He may not have enough visual recall to remember the look of a word. He may in this case try phonetic spelling and get on better with regular words than irregular ones.
3. He may not be able to write a letter when given its name.
4. He may have particular difficulty with function words: of, an, the, etc.
5. He may find abstract and unusual words more difficult that concrete and everyday words.
6. He may transpose letters: "gril" for "girl", "buhs" for "bush".
7. He may omit letters or substitute others: "floewe" for "flower", "bred" for "bread".
8. He may repeat previously written letters: "tablee" for "table".
9. He may substitute associated words: "knife" for "fork", "shoe" for "sock".
10. He may substitute similar sounding words: "skirt" for "shirt".

It is after analysis that the tutor can assist the student by introducing methods of learning spellings and helping him discover which work effectively for him. "Helping Adults to Spell" published by ALBSU, is a useful booklet to read. It is worth persevering with a method once chosen, but if a particular method is obviously failing try another. See Susan's Case Study for specific ideas.

Jim

Communication Assessment

Jim shows little difficulty in understanding whatever is said, though he is somewhat deaf and doesn't always hear. He is not a fluent speaker but can with difficulty get across what is always a sensible idea. He was never a particularly keen reader but read newspapers and is now beginning to manage short articles again. In writing he can manage short phrases.

Own Aims

Jim is someone who communicates positively though with few words. He is keen to come to class and participates fully in all aspects of it. He has a concerned and supportive wife who feels that class is especially valuable for him as he no longer has any other speech therapy. She drives Jim and others to class.

	RATING	
ATTITUDE TO PEOPLE	4/5	Friendly
UNDERSTANDING	5	Somewhat deaf
SPEECH	2	Appropriate use language, but not fluent
READING	4	
WRITING	3	

Understanding What is Said

The usual common sense care must always be taken to put Jim in a place where he can hear well before beginning oral activities.

Map Work

A suitable, high-level activity is to use a map, either a section of a real one or a schematic one, as a focus for oral directions. Take into account whether the sense of left and right is disturbed or not.

- ☐ Ask questions to elicit pointing; Where will I go to buy a stamp?
- ☐ Trace routes to specific destinations.
- ☐ Measure distances: an opportunity for number work.

Remember that speech is not the main focus of this activity.

Games

Games, best played in groups of similar ability, are often a boisterous way to listen. You can make up your own or vary old favourites or use commercially produced ones.

This one is a variation on "I went on a journey and in my case I packed . . . ." Form Jim's group into a circle of students and volunteers. Everyone plays so that there are some fluent speech models.

Get everyone to say one whole phrase, "I am going shopping and at the shop I am going to buy a . . . ." each time.

The first person names something beginning with 'A'. The second repeats the 'A' word and names a 'B' word of his own and so on.

Use of the alphabet, though in a way an additional complication, aids recall of the words said.

Speech

His main frustration and the source of greatest difficulty for his family is Jim's lack of fluent speech. He is dyspraxic (see page 9) as well as non-fluent. His words come out singly or not at all and the sound is often distorted so that it is difficult to make out the word he is uttering. He knows very well what he is trying to say and can monitor how far away he is from saying it so there is much frustration involved for him. Jim would therefore like to work on his speech and try to make it better even though he realises that gains may be small.

Role-play

A useful activity may be to choose with him a situation from his daily life where he would like to be able to speak more and then practise all aspects of that situation — a meal-time for example. There is the chance for a lot of speech work as well as a lot of back-up writing activity in setting up for acting out:

- ☐ naming and categorising of food
- ☐ description of the same
- ☐ formulating and practising actual everyday phrases

It is helpful if the phrases and vocabulary are written down in an exercise book, marked for easy finding, so that they are available as a back-up or stimulus at home. After playing out the scene a few times in class, it is useful to talk over the activity with his wife and encourage him to try out his vocabulary in the real situation at home, later on remembering to ask them how it has worked out.

Sounds:

Jim needs to work on the articulatory level of language, for he is dyspraxic. Dyspraxia is a very frustrating condition because it varies constantly. The student can be seen groping to find the right sound. You may be able to cue him by giving him a short sentence e.g.

You sit on a .....,

or by encouraging him to write down the word, or a part of the word.

If you decide to work on sounds with such a student then remember that it takes much practice — ideally daily — in order to retrain the memory for how the sound is made.

1 Help the student make the individual sound e.g. "p". Look in a mirror. Get the student to feel how he makes the sound by putting his fingers on his lips. Get him to look at and listen to you as you make the sound. Describe how you make it e.g. "Push your lips together hard. Feel the puff of air if you put your hand near your mouth." (There are books you can look at if you want to know how sounds are made, e.g. Gimson, "The Phonetics of English", or ask a speech therapist).

   Using *articulograms*, i.e. a *schematic* drawing of the lips making the sound "p", can also serve as a visual prompt.

   Practise until the student can say the sound on its own e.g. everytime you hold up a flashcard with "p" he can say the sound without your prompting.

2 Link up the "p" with a vowel e.g. pie, pea, paw, pan. Pictures can help; and you can also write out the word large with the articulogram of "p" written above the letter "p" to remind the student.

3 Once the student has reached this level, then you can either start to use "p" in more and more complex words, or contrast "p" with another sound e.g. "t".

   For a very clear outline of this whole area of sound work, consult the chapter "Improving Intelligibility" in 'Working with Dysphasics', by Fawcus, Robinson, Williams and Williams (Winslow Press).

Reading for Understanding

As Jim's speech is poor, you cannot of course, judge his reading skill by how well he can read aloud. Despite the fact that he never was an enthusiastic reader of books, he would like to improve his skills to be able to read at least newspapers freely again.

Use of Texts

He enjoys and was pleased to discover the simplified texts used in Adult Literacy classes and likes looking over the class stock in order to borrow them to read at home. To extend the use of these to class after they have been read at home, you can try various strategies.

Questioning

He can be encouraged to make a response to the text.

This can be done by asking questions such as:

- What happened?
- Why? How?
- Can you tell me what this piece of writing says in your own words?
- Is this text well written, accurate, up-to-date, relevant, biased?
- Did you enjoy reading it? Why or why not?

Where he would find it difficult to give a verbal answer, you can consider one of the following methods:

- selecting the correct answer by pointing, ticking, underlining or circling
- deleting incorrect answers
- crossing out true or false after statements about the texts
- answering yes, no or can't tell in response to statements.

SRA cards

These cards, which proceed on a carefully structured basis to develop reading skills, have a brief text accompanied by a picture, some vocabulary work related to the text and spelling work.

Jim, who likes non-fiction, enjoys the texts and finds the pictures helpful. He can take them home to do there on a regular basis, checking them in class.

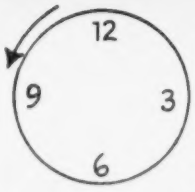
The texts are suitable for shadow-reading where the tutor reads with the student, providing impetus as needed to keep the flow of words. Explanation of the spelling section will often be needed and development of the spelling and vocabulary ideas is sometimes desirable.

Writing

Handwriting and Spelling

Like many dysphasic people, Jim must write with his left hand so that even forming letters is a slow clumsy process. However, he has found that practice has helped him to make good improvement and as he has become more co-ordinated he has been able to move quickly from practising letter shapes, to printing, to joined writing.

You can follow basic principles of teaching handwriting going quickly or slowly to suit the individual student. Lower case letters are best taught in families according to their formation. This minimises the amount of learning that the student must do. Anti-clockwise letters are best taught first since this group includes more vowels (c,e,o,a,d,g,q,s,f) and many more words can be made from these letters. Clockwise letters (r,n,m,h,p,b) form the next group, followed by letters which loop (l,t,i,u,y,j) and straight letters (v, k, x and z). Block capitals are divided into three groups: letters with entirely straight lines, letters with an anti-clockwise curve and letters with a clockwise curve. Going over the shape of the letter before writing enables the student to get the feel of the movement and enhances his chance of success. Begin by writing large letters using thick felt tips and reduce the size of the writing as the student becomes more fluent.



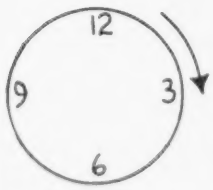
HANDWRITING

Anti-clockwise letters

1. c_____ o_____ e_____
   d_____ g_____ q_____
   s_____ f_____ a_____

2.

add	do	does	dog
egg	ease	go	goes
good	gas	see	sea
age	cage	case	cod
code	cod	fog	fed
feed	fad	sad	safe



3. Clockwise letters

r_____
n_____
m_____
h_____
b_____

4. straight letters

v_____
w_____
x_____
k_____

5. tails

i_____
t_____
l_____
u_____

joins: start every letter on the line except 'o' and 'z'
finish every letter with an upward tail except

g j f r o x z s v w

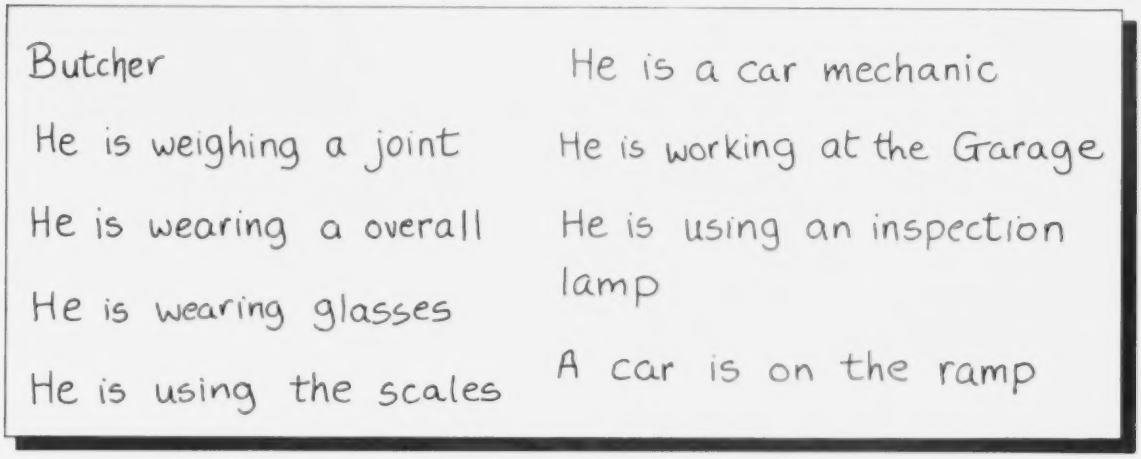
ov and w need a horizontal tail e.g.

CAPITALS STRAIGHT: A E F H I K L M N T V W Y Z

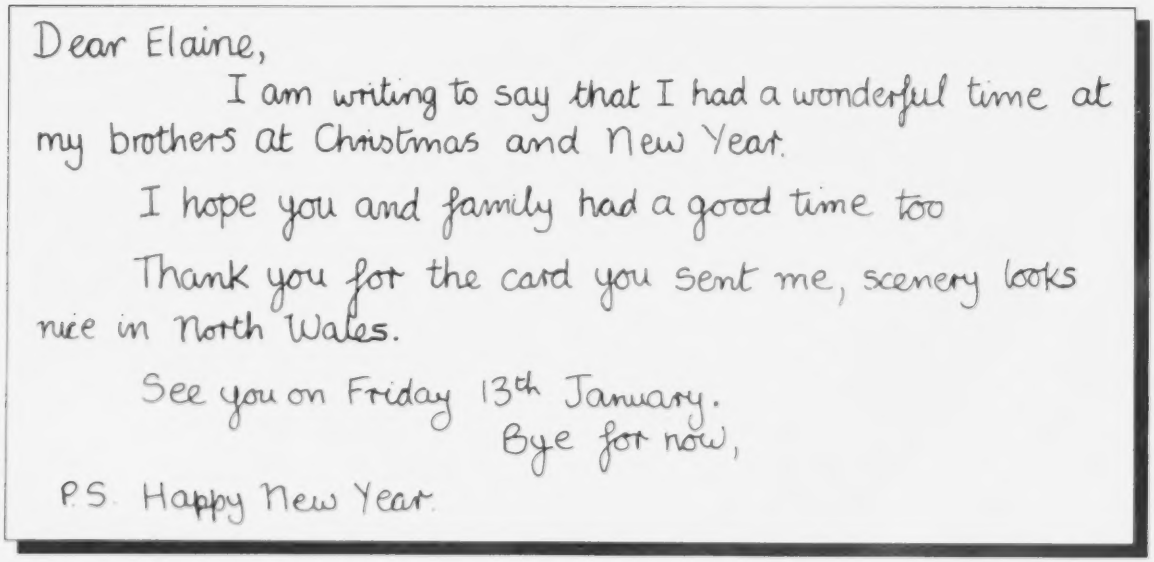
CURVED: ↘ B D J R P ↙ C G O Q S U

With his left arm resting comfortably on the table, his right arm also on the table to steady the paper and square up his position, with a clipboard or blu-tak to hold the paper and a free-flowing pen, Jim has learned to write neatly and his writing has a good appearance.

Clearly, developing handwriting skills goes with working on spelling and composition. The idea that joined-up writing encourages a flow of patterns of commonly associated letters has relevance to the dysphasic student's impaired language function. A flow of writing may allow whole words to be produced automatically, without a struggle for every letter. Working on words with similar letter patterns practises spelling with handwriting. Jim is working with some success toward developing enough fluency in writing to compensate for his lack of speech or at least to use at times to make his meaning clear. His achievements in writing bring him a good deal of satisfaction.


Butcher
He is weighing a joint
He is wearing a overall
He is wearing glasses
He is using the scales
He is a car mechanic
He is working at the Garage
He is using an inspection lamp
A car is on the ramp

Work sample January 1982


Dear Elaine,
I am writing to say that I had a wonderful time at my brothers at Christmas and New Year.
I hope you and family had a good time too
Thank you for the card you sent me, scenery looks nice in North Wales.
See you on Friday 13th January.
Bye for now,
P.S. Happy New Year.

Example of writing two years later

Letter Writing

Letter writing is a valuable activity for Jim. Sometimes he has a particular correspondent in the family or a friend to write to. If not, a teaching group can generate enough occasions and invitations to a class party, birthday greetings etc., to make writing functional. Each part of the text may be given a key word or phrase, around which the paragraphs can be built. If each paragraph is titled with the key phrase and put into the student's work book, it can later be selected and copied with the minimum of tutor support to form other letters. A similar strategem can be used to assist with other kinds of writing.

BUILDING TOWARDS A LETTER

☐ **The weather**

poor weather	good weather
snow	sunny
cold	hot
fog	warm
rain	dry
damp	

☐ **Television and radio**

I like watching.....on the television

I like listening to.....on the radio

☐ **Going out**

I like to go shopping
to the theatre
to my therapy class
to my pottery class
for a walk

☐ **Holidays**

I went away for a few days
a week
a fortnight

I went to.....

☐ **Visitors**

Jane, John, Margaret } came to see me { (yesterday), (last week), (not long ago)

Harold

Communication Assessment

When assessed on the **Communication Assessment**, Harold already showed improvements compared with the description that we gave of his language skills in the first chapter. He could understand almost normally. His speech and language had continued to improve so that he could be placed between levels 4 and 5 on the speech scale. He had initially felt rather isolated at class since he was much younger than some of the other group members, but now shared in talk at coffee time and socialised far more, rather than tending to monopolise one tutor and talk to her alone. His reading had slowly improved to the point where he could read easy newspaper articles and answer multiple choice questions relating to a text. He wrote with his left hand which was gradually acquiring more graphical expertise, and he could write phrases and short sentences both spontaneously, and as part of an exercise. In short, he is now the kind of dysphasic student who is in many ways most suited for a basic education class, in that his oral and aural skills are at a very good level, and the emphasis of work can be placed on literacy skills. He is therefore an ideal student for a tutor who has not long been in the basic education scheme, since his speech ;'laces no barrier in the way of literacy work.

Own Aims

He is hopeful of being able to return to his managerial work at some point, and so is keen to improve all aspects of reading, writing and numeracy that lead back to this. He also needs to improve his concentration since he gets very tired after a couple of hours' work and would thus find a return to full time employment very hard at the moment.

So, unlike many other dysphasic adults he has the goal of trying to regain some occupation, and teaching must take this into account.

	RATING	
ATTITUDE TO PEOPLE	5	Improving self-confidence
UNDERSTANDING	5	
SPEECH	4/5	
READING	3	Easy newspaper articles
WRITING	3	

Understanding What is Said

Activities with Harold focused mainly on improving auditory memory, which is almost inevitably reduced in dysphasia.

Story Precis:

For such high level students, listening work geared towards functional activities is interesting. One can read out a paragraph from a newspaper, or prepare and read out the sort of news item that one would hear on the television or radio. The student then has to retell in his own words what he has heard. Encourage him to remember the main points. This activity is only worthwhile if you feel sure that your student's speech is not going to prevent him from expressing what he may have understood extremely well. An alternative, linking up with writing skills, is to ask your student to jot down the key words of the story, after he has heard it being read.

Auditory Comprehension as a Support for Reading

Many dysphasic adults are in the position of no longer being able to read the books they formerly enjoyed. If their auditory comprehension is good enough, however, then they may well benefit from the many cassette tapes that are available now. The service originally designed for the blind is eminently suitable for many dysphasic adults. It can help ease psychological frustration and pressure

while reading comprehension is gradually returning. The student may prefer to use them mainly at home, using them as a basis for later discussions/writing in class. Two such suppliers are:

- National Listening Library, 49 Great Cumberland Place, London.
- Calibre (Cassette Library for the Blind and Handicapped), Wendover, Aylesbury, Bucks.

Speech and Language

Harold is able to contribute a great deal to group and tutor-student discussions, because his grammar and vocabulary have returned nearly to normal. Too much haste or emotion can still adversely affect his language, and he may have to stop what he is saying and start again, especially if he has word-finding problems. He can still get very embarrassed by his language difficulties, because he is acutely aware of every lapse. Debates, role play, etc are therefore still helpful to him, to encourage him to use what speech he has with confidence.

Dysarthria

This has been explained on pages 9 and 23. It is a difficulty in the muscular control of articulation. The right side of Harold's face is very weak, making his speech rather indistinct at times. Work was therefore done on this from time to time.

General points of help are:

- get the student to slow down. This gives the lips and tongue more time to make efficient gestures
- make sure sufficient breaths are taken
- tape your student when he is practising words and sentences, so that he can hear how he sounds to other people.

If you tape your student reading a list of words, a paragraph, and talking spontaneously about something — relating what he did the previous day for example — then you will be able to analyse where the difficulty lies:

- lip sounds, e.g. b,w,f.
- tongue sounds, e.g. s,sh,t,k,

The sounds s, sh, ch, j often cause particular difficulty, as do such blends as sl, fr, cr, etc.

Sounds may be distorted, or omitted entirely. There may be difficulty with short words, or only with polysyllabic words. Try practising the individual sound, then the sound in different positions in words — e.g. sun, missing, bus; and then in sentences. Tongue-twisters can be an advanced exercise for fun. Flash-cards and sentences will also give the student practice in reading as well as in articulation.

Advanced Reasoning Tasks

These have helped Harold to use his language at as high a level as possible. Examples are:

- explaining the abstract meaning behind a concrete proverb such as "All that glitters is not gold"
- explaining why something is an "odd one out" e.g. out of a sequence of **yew, oak, beech, chair**
- explaining the similarities and differences between a pair of words such as **town** and **city** or **clown** and **comic.**

Reading

Harold has enjoyed reading a variety of prepared texts, and has also used the language experience approach a great deal. It is very suitable for Harold because he has enough oral language to generate a text easily, but one that is at an appropriate level for his current reading ability.

The use of the language experience approach has to be considered more carefully when working with dysphasic students who have difficulty in using particular parts of speech or in sequencing sentences.

The Language Experience Approach

Full descriptions of the language experience approach can be found in basic education books on reading. A brief outline only is given here. The tutor writes down the student's speech, which can be part of spontaneous conversation, discussion of a text or a picture, or piece of music. Pictures are an

especially useful stimulus because they give visual prompts which aid speech, memory and comprehension. The tutor may need to prompt the student's speech through "wh" questions — why? when? what? where? who? how? e.g. "Who is this?" "What is she doing?" "Where is she?" The questioning process tends to focus the student's attention on various aspects of the picture, and on to specific parts of speech e.g. nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs.

LESSON PLAN

Aim: a) to generate enough language for the language experience approach to reading

or b) to extend the length of the students' sentences

or c) to move from naming items in a picture to building sentences

Materials used: picture of lady buying vegetables in an open air market

1. **Who** is this?
   A man or a woman?
   Can you give her a name?

Response: "Mrs Jones."

2. **Where** is she?

Response: "In the market."

Sentence so far: Mrs Jones is in the market.

3. **What** is she doing?

Response: "Buying vegetables."

Sentence so far: Mrs Jones is in the market buying vegetables.

4. **Why** does she want the vegetables?

Response: "For a stew."

Sentence so far: Mrs Jones is in the market buying vegetables for a stew.

5. **When** do you think Mrs Jones goes to the market?
   On what days?

Response: "On Friday."

Sentence completed: On Friday, Mrs Jones is in the market buying vegetables for a stew."

In this case the question **"How"** has not been posed.

Harold himself did not need any prompting and was able to provide a text even without any visual cues. Talking about his hobbies, his work, and his childhood furnished suitable texts.

Once the text is written down, in large clear print, with line breaking where appropriate, a variety of activities is possible, including: reading text together; matching exact copies of words and phrases taken from the text, with the original text, turning existing sentences into questions to be answered using yes or no.

Two activities using a language experience text were particularly helpful to Harold:

Sequencing

Suppose your text is composed of 3 or 4 sentences. Write each sentence out on a separate piece of card, and present them jumbled up to the student, for re-sequencing. This is an especially helpful activity for dysphasic adults who can understand single sentences, but who find difficulty in carrying meaning from one sentence or paragraph to the next.

Re-assembling a jumbled sentence

Choose just one sentence from the text, write it out on card, and cut it up into individual words, which the student has to reassemble. He may leave out, or put in the wrong place, the smaller words such as *in, on, for* etc., so this is a good task for focusing attention on these. This is also a much better way of checking that your student has *really* understood the text since some dysphasics can read aloud fluently *without* grasping meaning.

Writing

Harold made use of workbooks on spelling, vocabulary and grammar to improve his writing, and details of these are noted on page 49. Although he could describe a picture quickly and well, trying to write down what he had said turned into a slow process because of short-term memory problems in conjunction with grappling with spelling and punctuation difficulties. It was felt that visual prompts could help in writing and so we introduced:

The John Lea Colour Pattern Scheme

This is only one of many schemes available. You can quite easily devise your own. Different parts of speech are assigned different colours, e.g. nouns — red; verbs — yellow; adjectives — green. Various patterns can then be illustrative of sentence structure.

e.g.	*The man*	*is walking*		*a*	*fast*	*car*
	red line	yellow line		red	green	red

(For more details see J. Lea. The Colour Pattern Scheme: A Method of Remedial Language Teaching, Moor House School, Oxted, Surrey, 1970).

This colour scheme could also be used to help with speech, with dysphasic students who have a lower language level that Harold.

You can use a colour scheme in different ways e.g. gradually explain the system, perhaps building up with one new part of speech and its colour every week.

- ☐ The student has to underline the words in a sentence with the appropriate colours.
- ☐ Drills. Give the student a series of pictures which can all be described using a particular pattern e.g. The man is walking, the girl is eating. The basic structure is the same: The X is Xing, though the vocabulary differs. Give the colour pattern. The student then has to write out a sentence for each picture.
- ☐ Different sentence patterns can be more easily remembered with colour.

e.g. Statement	*The girl is looking* red yellow
becomes in Question	*Is the girl looking?* yellow red yellow

Writing for Work

Harold's previous job had entailed quite a lot of reading and writing, and it was felt appropriate to work on writing skills that would help him get back to work.

- ☐ Use of a calculator, which he had used for various arithmetical calculations including VAT.
- ☐ Form-filling. At work, Harold had large and complex invoices to complete. These did not require original writing so much as accurate legible copying. Work started with simple form-filling, and then progressed to the actual invoices that he had used at work. Games to improve visual memory helped e.g. looking at a row of random letters or figures, and then trying to write it from memory.
- ☐ Harold's work had been with plants, and he worked with his tutor on nursery catalogues and other real-life materials, with dictation of words that he would be likely to use at work.
- ☐ He had used the telephone a great deal at work, and although he could now talk well, he needed practice in jotting down key words of the conversation. This to date has been the most difficult writing task for him, because he is working under pressure — unlike leisurely exercises from a spelling book!

Susan

Communication Assessment

The Communication Assessment shows Susan to be in the middle range of most modalities. She listens to conversations and has little difficulty following, though it is easier for her if you address yourself directly to her rather than expect her to pick up remarks addressed to others. Her speech and responses flow quite easily, with gaps as she searches for words. She enjoys reading newspapers, even the more difficult ones she formerly read, but when you work together on reading you find that she misses much of the sense. She finds herself able to write short sentences but the process is slow as she must search for words and spelling.

Own Aims

She is quite determined to improve and as she is single and lives with aged parents she needs to become as independent of outside help as she can. She has a clear idea of what her limits are and won't attempt tasks she feels are too difficult or not to her liking. Because her speech is stripped of extra words she seems abrupt as she refuses a suggestion or interruption though a smile softens the rejection. She says that she has found the opportunity to be with and talk to others the best aspect of coming to class and certainly her attitude has noticeably changed from being rather withdrawn and solemn to being more friendly and cheerful. When discussing aims with her and trying to plan for goals for a term's work, the tutor finds her vague about tasks and subjects and even interests. She agrees that everyday activities will be important but indicates that she would rather work on general exercises first.

	RATING	
ATTITUDE TO PEOPLE	4/5	growing more relaxed
UNDERSTANDING	5	still difficulty with group conversation
SPEECH	4	
READING	3/4	difficulty retaining sense from paragraph to paragraph
WRITING	3	word finding difficulty

Here are examples of work under each heading that might be suitable for someone like Susan.

Understanding What is Said

Taped materials:

With the overall aim in mind of gradually extending Susan's understanding of complex oral materials, you might use a variety of taped materials that you make yourself or that are available commercially. Consider taping:

- ☐ a short news broadcast
- ☐ a weather report
- ☐ sounds around the house
- ☐ outdoor noises
- ☐ a short story etc.

Tapes commercially available: Chest, Heart & Stroke tapes, L.D.A. Listen Here tapes.

Having in mind that a quiet place is necessary and that her full attention must be directed at the task, try various questioning or other activities with the tapes.

An example of such an activity might be:

Use the L.D.A. tapes of ordinary sounds which are accompanied by picture cue cards and graded in difficulty from single commonplace sounds to ones which have to be picked out from other background noises:

- ☐ Having explained what you are doing and the purpose of it, play a few of the first sequences of three sounds and working on remembering, ask her to name the sounds heard in order, deciding to use visual cues only if needed.
- ☐ Ask her to choose one of the sounds that she was interested by and to name other sounds that might also be heard in the same situation.
- ☐ You are building up in this way to asking her to imagine a scene: she might describe the scene as an extension of the task, orally or briefly in whole written sentences.

The main focus here is on sounds as oral comprehension but using them to re-assemble a whole which a dysphasic person might get at only in a fragmentary way.

Pictures:

Get together pictures: of every day scenes, objects, people, sequences.

Sources: magazines, newspapers, L.D.A., P.T.M.

Ask questions requiring her: to describe, name, point, tell the use of, sequence, etc.

Pictures make a good focus for discussion. It is important to plan the questions fully so that you move in a deliberate way from the concrete to asking for responses that note the implications. Remember that in this oral comprehension activity your talking time is as important as hers. Talk clearly but at normal pace. If it proves necessary to repeat, try using different phrasing.

Speech and Language

Role Play:

One kind of activity to use for speech development is role-play, particularly helpful for gaining techniques for coping with life situations. Practice for meal-times, shopping, etc., can all be extended by actually going to the real situation afterwards.

Practising the use of the telephone is the kind of activity Susan says she would like to do. If you can get hold of a set of telephones that actually work (available from British Telecom) so much the better.

- ☐ Write down on cards a number of telephone situations involving calling up and answering. Try to think together of one she needs like making a doctor's appointment or ordering food to be delivered.
- ☐ Plan together, before attempting the calls, the kind of stock responses that might be handy for a lot of situations and that suit the speech available to her and if necessary write them down.
- ☐ Try out calls and discuss them afterwards.
- ☐ Try again in class a few weeks later.
- ☐ Plan with her: you telephoning her and she calling you.

Language development

A more general activity which has as its aim to help her to rebuild language structures is to focus on naming, not only objects but actions. You can then move from naming to building sentences about the words. As Susan finds that seeing something written helps her to say it, a pattern might be established by working through it in writing before carrying on with other examples in oral form. Pictures are helpful.

- ☐ Take a picture of a boy kicking a football, for example.
- ☐ Ask her to name the action.
- ☐ Ask her to put those words into a sentence: it is here that she would very likely wish to write it down and this will help her to include the joining words, articles, prepositions, helping verbs and the like.
- ☐ Ask her to say the sentence.
- ☐ Try other similar sentences without writing first.

In this activity your talking time is to be minimal, as you encourage her to speak.

Sources of pictures: L.D.A., P.T.M.

Reading for Understanding

Having always been a great reader, Susan would now like to develop her reading skills so that she can read for pleasure again. She needs also to read well enough to cope with routine household needs.

Telephone directory:

A suitable subject for reading practice that ties in with other work she is doing is use of the telephone directory. Her naming aloud of alphabet letters is halting but she can use alphabetical order well (so that much preliminary work is not needed). She can also manage, though with some difficulty, to read the small print and handle the thin pages of the telephone book. A number of activities spread over a period of time are possible. Encourage her to minimise the awkwardness of dealing with the books by placing them conveniently and firmly, with paper and pens handy.

- ☐ Task: make a list of useful numbers of local relatives and friends with addresses
  - —list names first getting the spelling
  - —using the white pages find numbers and addresses and copy them either in a permanent list in a handy pad or to be made into such a list later.
- ☐ Task: make a list of other useful numbers
  - —list, for example, doctor, ambulance, emergency, taxi, etc.
  - —using the yellow pages, find these numbers and list in suitable categories.

Cloze Procedure

Another activity that can be made relative to any reading matter Susan is interested in, whether a book, newspaper or magazine, is using cloze procedure with an excerpt from whatever is being read at the time.

Cloze exercises are made by deleting words from a text. As the student seeks to fill in the gaps she is encouraged to use contextual cues:

- ☐ to predict meaning
- ☐ to read more fluently by using guessing as a technique
- ☐ to read back and forth
- ☐ to make use of textual information
- ☐ to use her existing knowledge of language, subject matter and style
- ☐ to be flexible and specific in word-finding.

The aim of the exercise is to fill in the gaps with words that make sense and are close to the meaning intended by the author. The missing words can be written at the bottom of the worksheet and folded under if a checklist is required. However, in most cases, it is sufficient to encourage reasonable guesses on the part of the student and to stress this rather than absolute accuracy. Checklists are only useful if they reduce frustration where gaps cannot be filled or if they serve as a starting point for discussion of the alternative choices available.

It is important to consider which words to delete. Words can be left out on a numerical basis (7th, 8th etc), but random selection is not very appropriate for most dysphasic students.

It is more helpful to delete on a grammatical basis to encourage development of a specific part of speech. Alternatively, the student can be helped to notice particular visual patterns by missing out prefixes, suffixes, consonant blends or vowel digraphs. Or, as often students miss out common, visually similar small words, you can make a text with two or three of these essential words missing, and ask the student to choose from a list and put the right words into the gaps.

What makes cloze especially suitable for Susan is the effect it has of causing the reader to pay close attention to the meaning. It focuses the attention and helps concentration. If the words omitted in this situation focus on key words for meaning, then their replacement can also serve as a good aid to memory. The dysphasic person often experiences difficulty in recalling the sense of what he may be reading with ease from paragraph to paragraph or even sentence to sentence. A strategy that can be built up for independent use is learning to note and mark key words, practised by using cloze to pinpoint and focus meaning.

Example of a Magazine letter used as cloze exercise.
(Key Nouns deleted)

Speak your age

One morning, I rang my local health centre
to make an appointment for my son.
The receptionist said,
"Do bring your little boy along
as soon as possible. The doctor likes to see
the children first.
I explained that
my little boy was over six feet tall
and had been working for many years.
The receptionist was amazed because
my voice sounded so youthful.
That made me think.
Many of us work hard at diets and exercises
in a continual effort to stay young.
But the voice also changes over the years.
Health and beauty books seem to ignore this point.
A voice can give one's age away
as much as a dropped chin and wrinkles.

Retype, deleting the underlined words.

Checklist

receptionist	children	voice	books
boy	boy	diets	chin
doctor	years	exercises	

Writing

Writing is an activity which Susan was at first reluctant to try as it involved a number of difficulties: she had to write with the left hand as her right was still affected by paralysis; she had to capture and keep in mind the word she wanted to write; she had then to find the letters for that word without being able to rely on a good sense of sound/letter correspondence. Sometimes the wanted word would roll out more or less automatically, but sometimes it would be a letter by letter battle, requiring a lot of encouragement from the tutor.

Spelling

Various techniques of learning spelling were tried, depending on the words themselves and how much 'flowed' without a struggle. It was also necessary for Susan and her tutor to decide whether the spelling practice was a part of general language enrichment or whether a particular word had to be retained. Of the following methods 'Look, Cover, Write, Check' and 'Deletions' helped Susan most when she was searching for spelling while writing. The 'Tracing Method' helped most for remembering necessary words.

Methods of Learning Spelling

1. Use of flashcards

- ☐ Write a word black on white.
- ☐ On the back of the card write a cue: a sentence using the word in a familiar setting or a picture or a word double — in/inn.

- ☐ **Read words as they gradually build up each session.**
- ☐ Write words each session.
- ☐ Practise at home.
- ☐ Use in context.

2. *Tracing method*

- ☐ Write a word in **large script** on card.
- ☐ Trace with forefinger over the word.
- ☐ Repeat as many times as necessary.
- ☐ Write without looking, on scrap paper and then in context.

This method, devised by Grace Fernald in the 1940's, has been successful when all else has failed in many difficult cases. You see dysphasic adults tracing words in the air or on their knees as a natural stimulus to recall.

3. *Handwriting Practice*

Practise hard to remember words in joined up script.

It is thought by several spelling researchers that joined up writing leads to a kind of automatic recall better than single printed letters. Typing or practice on a computer may relieve the physical burden of learning to write again (See Jim's Case Study).

4. *Semantic Clues*

Give clues to re-inforce the meaning of the word e.g. a picture, a sentence or a phrase such as "something made of leather to protect the foot", "something to sit on . . ."

5. *Look, cover, write, check*

- ☐ Write the word clearly in felt-tip pen.
- ☐ Look at it. Try to remember it.
- ☐ Cover it up.
- ☐ Write the spelling.
- ☐ Check it.

If wrong, underline any hard bits or omissions and try again. This works well with students who have a visual memory reasonably intact.

6. *Hidden words*

- ☐ Look for the hidden words in a longer word.
  e.g. sincerely : since rely because : be cause

Spotting a familiar word in a longer word reduces the load on the memory. The sequence of letters may be recalled more easily.

7. *Syllable breaking*

- ☐ This involves splitting the word up into smaller units.
- ☐ Write the word on card and cut it into sections.
- ☐ Jumble the parts and then re-arrange them into the correct order.
- ☐ Try the look, cover, write, check technique with each section of the word in turn. This is particularly helpful with longer words.

8. *Letter tiles*

- ☐ Make a master card **cake** and letter tiles to match c a k e
- ☐ Match the tiles to the spelling.
- ☐ Remove the master card.
- ☐ Re-order the jumbled letter tiles. When correct, write the word.

This method is helpful with shorter words, or where the student has difficulty with substitution, omission or reversal of letters.

9. *Deletions*

- ☐ Give the student a word card with two consecutive letters missing, e.g. Jan--ry. Fill in the gaps.
- ☐ Write the word in full.
- ☐ Present another card, e.g. J--uary. Repeat the exercise.

This method is useful when one part of the word presents difficulty

10. *Spelling pronunciation*

- ☐ Remember the spelling by saying the word as it is spelled.
  e.g. WED — NES — DAY

This method assists with phonetically irregular words.

11. *Saying the letter names*

- ☐ Say the names of the letters in the spelling.
- ☐ Build up a rythmn if possible. Students need good auditory discrimination and memory but this method may help if the student cannot recall spellings visually.

12. *Rules*

- ☐ It may help to practise building up phonetically regular words. Gradually rules can be introduced, for example adding an "e"
  e.g. hat — hate

Some students are able to work out a spelling logically.

13. *Noticing groups of similar words*

- ☐ Link a new spelling with a familiar one
  e.g. remarkab**le** with handl**e**
  or n**eigh**bour with **eight**
- ☐ String similar words into a sentence
  e.g. I c**aught** my n**aught**y d**aught**er and t**aught** her a lesson.

14. *Mnemonics*

- ☐ There is an "e" for envelope in stationery
- ☐ Sep**arat**e is **a rat** of a word.

15. *Changing the function of the word*

Some students who have difficulty spelling small functional words such as in, of, the, and, may be helped by presenting the word in a noun form.

e.g. in inn at b**at** of l**oft** This thistle the clo**the**s

The noun form may act as a prompt to the recall of the required letter sequence.

Exercises

Eventually Susan came to take satisfaction in practising writing skills by doing a variety of exercises from texts, feeling that these were possible for her to do on her own at home and were for her a general review of language to be checked and discussed briefly in class with a tutor, (See page 49). It is better to avoid using these same texts in class, unless to extend the single words or phrases by making them into sentences or relating them to texts or pictures.

Cheques

Cheque writing proved to be an interesting task which gave Susan the opportunity to practise writing the date and a satisfactory signature as well as to do some number work. If cheque writing can be fostered to the point of becoming a useful skill so much the better. Making lists of numbers in word form as a memory aid helps the goal seem easier to achieve.

Ernie

Communication Assessment

Ernie was at 3 for all levels except writing where he was more appropriately placed at level 2. In attitude, he is very motivated to attend class because of his comparative isolation at home. His very real comprehension difficulties prevent him from initiating and sustaining conversations with other students as much as he would like, as one suspects he is naturally gregarious. He often brings photos and books to class, reflecting his deep interest in natural history and travel. There are seldom problems in making oneself understood with Ernie in the one to one situation, but in the group a question may have to be repeated and rephrased several times. At home Ernie finds speech on television and radio frequently too fast and complex to follow now. As far as language is concerned, he is able to construct sentences of normal length using many of the words such as "the", "and", "is", but with a lack of recognisable nouns, verbs, adverbs and adjectives. He may use inappropriate substitutions such as "chair" for "table" or use a word which is not English at all e.g. "roke" for "stool". On the other hand Ernie is able to say fluently many of the social phrases that make up a part of our daily communication — "How are you," "Can I help you", etc.

Own aims

Reading had always been a great interest of his, and he has many books at home, but he finds it hard to grasp and retain the meaning of more than a few sentences at a time. He is interested in reading papers, especially local papers. Since he is retired his need for writing has greatly decreased, and he retains few functional tasks such as shopping lists, writing cheques, etc. His children, who live nearby, give him nearly all the help he needs even with these few tasks.

	RATING	
ATTITUDE TO PEOPLE	(3)	inhibited by his tendency to confuse his listeners
UNDERSTANDING	(3)	
SPEECH	(3)	lack of content words (nouns, adjectives etc)
READING	(3)	
WRITING	(2)	

The most important point that emerged in getting to know Ernie was his lack of awareness of his mistakes. This difficulty in self-monitoring seems to be at the heart of the "jargon" or non-English utterances of this kind of fluent dysphasia. For this reason, in completing the student self-assessment Ernie was not able to formulate clear goals in relation to his speech and understanding. He greatly missed reading and was keen to improve this. He wrote with his right hand still, but could not even write his name and address when he first came to class. He liked the idea of working on such writing tasks as formal English exercises since he had at one period written creatively for pleasure e.g. he kept a diary of all his dreams. Seeing this diary gave the tutors a good idea of the former level of his literacy skills. Here are some of the tasks undertaken with Ernie in relation to four of the areas of assessment i.e. understanding, speech, reading and writing.

Understanding What is Said

This was an area of special importance for Ernie since improvement would help him monitor himself better, and his speech would automatically improve as a result. Activities were chosen that required a maximum of listening and a minimum of speech, in order to ensure the focus of attention was on comprehension, rather than on attempting to reply.

Sequencing picture-cards

Find a sequenced picture story; many are available, including "Social Sequences", "Sequential Thinking" (LDA). Do not have too many pictures at first — start with a story using three or four. Make up a simple sentence to describe each picture — it is best to write them down so that, if you

have to repeat them you do not change the wording. Put out the cards in random order in front of the student. Then give each sentence slowly, such that you describe the story in a logical order. The student has to listen to each sentence in turn, and find the picture that the sentence describes. As your student's ability improves, you have more pictures, or you make the sentences longer and more complex. You can tie this task in with reading by giving each sentence on card for the student to match with the appropriate picture. You could also ask your student to try to remember the sentence and repeat it. Remember though, that the original listening task simply requires the student to scan for a particular picture, pick it up and put it down in order.

Yes/No Questions to Short Paragraphs

The student has to listen to two or three short sentences together, rather than just one as in the previous task. There are no pictures to assist either. Read out a very short simple paragraph, either of your own devising, or from a text. The "Reading for Understanding" Scheme, for instance, could supply paragraphs, if chosen at a suitable level. Read the paragraph slowly, and with appropriate pauses. Repeat the paragraph until the student feels he has grasped it. Then ask some very short questions that require a minimum of speech i.e. Yes/No answers.

Speech and Language

Working on speech with Ernie was important because his jargon could be so bewildering for the tutors and other students, but it was difficult because of his lack of knowledge of whether his attempts were right or wrong. It was important not to point out and correct too many mistakes at a time — working on speech was very tiring for Ernie and could only be done for a short time at each class. **Vocabulary** or word-finding was a fruitful level of language to work on. At first, attempts were made to express specific nouns and verbs via the Amerind gestural code, since Ernie was so frustrated by his inability to "find the right word". Since he had no-one at home to practise with, however, it was felt that formal work on a sign system would not be productive although Ernie was encouraged to continue using gesture whenever possible to clarify his meaning when at class. Several oral activities were used for word-building. Whenever possible, record answers on a language master or tape-recorder so that the student can start to monitor himself.

Techniques to prompt or facilitate vocabulary include:

- ☐ Verbal cloze. If you want the word "butter" you say "bread and....." and the student can generally say "butter". More examples: "You sleep in a....." To prompt verbs, you can try such phrases as "A knife is for....."
- ☐ Phonic cueing — shape your lips/tongue, to show the first sound of the word. If necessary, *say* the first sound.
- ☐ Give information about the word – describe it, and its use. This may help the student to think of the word, e.g. apple: "It's a fruit, round, green, William Tell shot through it." Encourage the student to use a similar strategy.
- ☐ Show a picture of the object, or, if a real object, get the student to handle it.
- ☐ Ask the student to think of any associated words: the right word may then be triggered.
- ☐ Give the student a choice — "Is he *eating* or *washing?*" "Is it an *eagle* or a *sparrow?*"

It is a good idea to build up vocabulary around specific areas e.g. nouns and verbs associated with food and eating. This may serve as a memory prompt for the words.

Giving Instructions

In order to encourage Ernie to produce short sentences with lots of information in them, rather than long utterances that are "empty" of meaning, he is encouraged to describe a sequence of actions, e.g. how to make a cup of tea. Pictures are useful as prompts (LDA produce very good Photo Sequences and Social Sequences). The tutor and student first discuss the nouns, verbs, etc. involved, reinforced by the written word whenever necessary. The student then has to describe the actions, e.g. put the water in the kettle, put the kettle on the stove or plug the kettle in, etc. Taping this exercise and listening back may help the student. This can be very effectively done as a group exercise.

Reading

A great deal of work focuses on reading since it is Ernie's chief pleasure at home. Whenever possible texts relating to his interests are used. He can cope with fairly small print, but pictures are useful comprehension aids. As well as giving him simplified or simple adult texts, followed by discussion, question and answer, and cloze, the following reading activities also helped.

Categorization

This involves reading single words, and links in with the speech activities on increasing vocabulary. You can prepare your own sets of words, or use published materials, e.g. Philip and Tacey Word Classification Cards have three or four words relating to particular categories e.g. 4 fruits, 4 pieces of furniture, 4 animals. The student has to sort them out into the respective categories, and place at the head of each group the appropriate category term. An advantage of this activity is (as with the listening work above) that it can be carried out without the student *having* to speak, thus allowing him to concentrate fully on the reading task. If the student copes well with concrete nouns, then you can move on to verbs, adjectives, e.g. you could have groups of synonyms:

— dawdle, wander, idle, laze

— rush, run, hurry, race

— jump, leap, spring, hop

which are presented mixed up to the student, for sorting into categories. This sort of work soon encouraged Ernie to bring his *Roget's Thesaurus* into class although the simpler *Word Hunter's Companion* was found better for him to use.

This reading work can be extended by having the student insert the single words where appropriate into sentences, e.g. "He was late for work so he had to....." (rush).

A Functional Reading Task

Since Ernie lives on his own, being able to read instructions such as those on food tins, is important. The tutor can supply a variety of real-life materials, and then tackle the reading in a variety of ways:

- ☐ presenting fairly lengthy instructions in larger print and with appropriate line-breaking in order to facilitate comprehension. This can be done, for example, with recipes, since Ernie does his own cooking:

CAKE RECIPE

Ingredients

4oz butter or margarine
4oz caster sugar
2 (size 3) eggs
4oz S.R. flour
jam, marmalade or lemon curd
a little icing sugar

Method

1) Cream fat and sugar until light and fluffy.
2) Gradually beat in the beaten eggs.
3) Lightly fold in the sifted flour.
4) Divide the mixture between 2 greased and lined sandwich tins.
5) Bake in a moderate oven, Mark 4 or Elec 180°C 350°F for twenty minutes (or until the cake springs back when pressed with a finger).
6) Turn out the cakes. Remove the paper. Leave the cakes to cool on a rack.
7) Sandwich the cakes together with jam, marmalade or lemon curd.
8) Sift some icing sugar on the top.

- ☐ giving a sequence of instructions jumbled up, for the student to put in the right order, e.g. Drain peas well/Add a knob of butter/Put peas into boiling water/These peas were picked when tender: cook as directed for best results/Put ¼ pint of salted water into a saucepan/Boil for 10 minutes, uncovered.
- ☐ multiple-choice comprehension, e.g.: Drain peas well, add a knob of (salt/butter/egg).

Writing

Ernie did not require any help with the mechanics of writing. His ability to manipulate numbers was not affected by his stroke, and so he was able to cope with bills etc. Working on such functional tasks as shopping lists was not always very satisfying for him, as he had a family nearby who did weekly shopping for him and knew his requirements. Ernie was able to do all the necessary perceptual skills given at level 0 of the Writing Checklist i.e. drawing shapes, tracing, copying, writing name, and writing signature. It was decided therefore to try to use his former creative use of writing in the following ways:

Random (automatic) Writing

The idea is to build up your student's confidence by encouraging him to write *anything*. This can then be shaped wherever possible into real words. You may give a topic to write on, or a picture to look at, or initial letters to complete e.g. B.....; F.....; M..... Anything the student can produce is accepted. Some students may simply produce single words. Ernie was able to produce whole paragraphs e.g. a description of his favourite season: spring. Much of the writing paralleled his speech, in that jargon words were present. In most cases, however, resemblance to a real English word was apparent, so that the tutor and student were able to modify many sentences appropriately.

SPRING

It is pleasant to see at expectant during April and to following to May. The birds now singing and I am to showing special musical sounds. Robert Browning to remember of calling her Thrush. "That's the wise thrush seeing each song twice overy lest."

Many to see the birds many very sounds expecial of the chaffinch or the robin and blackbird and wren the Thrush.

The field of evening see them showing mush pleasure. Every varied of sound feeling pleasure. Water in the brook, to the trees, and sense in the winds. Every to seeing to the horse and dog sounding affection.

Do not be surprised by the level of vocabulary that sometimes emerges: it seems easier at times for the dysphasic student to remember a long latinate word rather than the short everyday words.

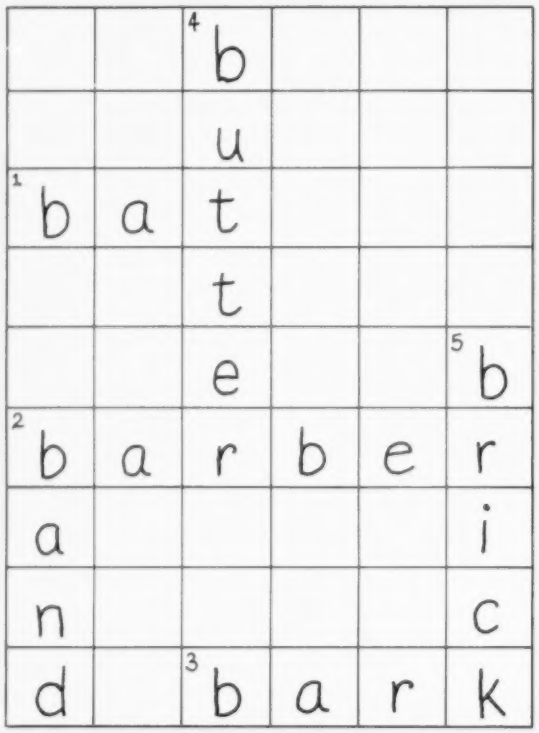
Formal Exercises

Ernie also enjoys working from books such as "Spelling 0-8" (Cassell); Stride Ahead in English; Junior Vocabulary Exercises (Wheaton), to name but a few. In these, he is able to reinforce vocabulary and grammar work covered in speech and reading activities. He is able to do much of it as homework, thus giving him the satisfaction of completing an exercise successfully without supervision.

In spelling particular attention is paid to phonics. Ernie tends to try to read words according to regular letter-sound relationships, a strategy which does not work for many English words, of course, but which would be useful to develop and strengthen, since it would help not only with spelling, but possibly with auditory discrimination, speech and reading aloud. Books such as "Alpha to Omega" help in following a structured programme, and the following are just some of the possible activities:

- ☐ discrimination of letters by their sound; picking out the correct letter when its sound is given

- ☐ discrimination of minimal pairs, e.g. pit, bit, by pointing to the written word when it is said aloud. The vowel can also be varied, e.g. bit, bat. Minimal pairs are words that differ only in respect of one of their sounds, whether consonant or vowel
- ☐ word closure — e.g. c—p, t—p. The different answers can be explored and noted. Reinforcing by speaking each word will also help in building up letter-sound relationships
- ☐ phonic crosswords using letters that have been worked on



across

1) you can hit a ball with this
2) He cuts men's hair
3) Rough outside part of a tree

down

2) They play music with brass
4) Bread and .....
5) You can build a wall with this

- ☐ unscrambling phonetically regular words, e.g. atc, lopt, mur
- ☐ writing words to dictation
- ☐ writing short sentences to dictation
- ☐ encourage visual memory with look, cover, spell method to reinforce the auditory associations used in the phonic method.

Useful Materials

For ease of use this resource list has been organised under the same headings as the Communication Assessment.

(Suppliers' addresses are given on page 50)

I Attitude to People/Situations

Books

Handbook of Indoor Social Activities (PTM)
Reality Orientation, Lorna Rimmer (PTM)

II Understanding What Is Said

Materials

Look Hear Ref. 125 (LDA)
Listen Here Ref. 218 (LDA)
Auditory Discrimination I (Initial Sounds) (PTM)
Auditory Discrimination II (Final Sounds) (PTM)
Chest Heart & Stroke Tapes (CHSA)
Talking Books/Magazines: National Listening Library, 49 Great Cumberland Place, London W1H.
Calibre (Cassette Library for the Blind and Handicapped) Wendover, Aylesbury, Bucks.
Language Master

III Speech

a) Books

Practical Activities for Stroke Groups, Andrea Miller and Ruth Coles
Modern English Pronunciation Practice, M.F. Munro Mackenzie (Longman)
Anthology of British Tongue Twisters, Ken Parkin

b) Materials

Most of the LDA and PTM equipment, e.g.
- Conversation Aids I The Family (PTM)
- Conversation Aids II Occupations (PTM)
- Verbs (PTM)
- Action Cards I Ref. 16 (LDA)
- Photographic Action Cards Ref. 54 (LDA)
- Why — Because Ref. 129 (LDA)
- Photo Sequences Ref. 156 (LDA)
- Chest Heart and Stroke Tapes (CHSA)

IV Reading for Understanding

a) Comprehension Exercises

Reading and Thinking Books 1-4, Series 1 and 2, A.J. Evans (Learning Materials Ltd., Remedial Supply Co., Dixon Street, Wolverhampton).
Reading for Adults, 1, 2, 3 (Longmans)
Developing Comprehension Skills, David Self (Ward Lock Educational)
1st Year Assessment Papers in Reasoning (Nelson)
2nd Year Assessment Papers in Reasoning (Nelson)
Reading for Understanding, General, International Reading Laboratory, 11a Science Research Associates Inc. Henley on Thames.

b) Reading List for Students

Choose from:-

Beginning
*Manx Man, (Dent)
*Raft on the River, (Dent)
*Crown Street Kings, (Macmillan)
Tom and Sheila, books with workbooks, (Sheffield & District Education)
WLE Library, (Ward Lock)
*Cassell Disco Books with work cards, (Cassell)
Winners Series, (Heinemann)
King of the Road, (Longmans)
Also the range of books published by Literacy Schemes (list available from ALBSU).

*these books have mainly teenage appeal

Intermediate:
Spiral books, (Macmillan)
Trigger, (Collins)
SRA Reading Cards
Getaway Books (Nelson)
Topliner, (Macmillan)
Longman Graded Series (select appropriate titles)
Heinemann Guided Readers: The Goalkeeper's Revenge, The Red Pony, etc.

Advanced:
Kennett Books
Bullseye Books, (Hutchinson)
Large Print Books
Oxford Graded Reading Series

Note:
Real life materials, for example newspapers, signs, things other students have written, Highway Code, magazines, etc. are useful at any level if they are presented appropriately (use of headlines only, cut out brief articles, with questions, etc); useful too for variety of print/letter presentations.

c) Dictionaries

Beginning:
Black's Writing Dictionary
James Green, A Word Hunter's Companion (Blackwell)

Intermediate:
Oxford Intermediate Dictionary

d) Materials

Social signs Ref. 55 (LDA)
Verbs and Labels for Verbs (PTM)
Occupations and Labels for Occupations (PTM)

V Writing

a) Books of Exercises

Under each category the book titles are arranged roughly in order of difficulty, with the most difficult last. There is obviously much overlapping, especially with books offering several levels.

Vocabulary Development and Spelling:

Spelling, 0-8, John Smith (Cassell)
Booster Workbooks, Books 1-5 (Heinemann)
Therapeutic Crosswords, Graded Workplace for Adults, levels A.B.C. (PTM)
Stride Ahead in English, Books 1-3, (Wheaton)
Junior Vocabulary Exercises, C.C. Crew (Wheaton)
Words Matter (Oliver and Boyd)

Words Work (Oliver and Boyd)
Graded Vocabulary Exercises, Books 1-3, O.B. Gregory (Wheaton)
Essentials of Verbal Reasoning, O.B. Gregory (Wheaton)
Exercises with your Dictionary, Eric Neal (Hulton)
Learn to Spell, W.D. Wright (Nisbet)
Phonic Crosswords, Doreen Nicholson (Good Reading Ltd.)
Increase your Vocabulary, Haydn Richards (Philograph)

Sentence Structure and Writing:

Beginning Composition through pictures, J.B. Heaton (Longman)
Guided Composition Exercises, D.H. Spencer (Longman)
Letter Writing, Ruth Lesirge and Roz Ivanic (Macmillan Educational)
A First Book in Comprehension, Precis and Composition, L.G. Alexander (Longman)
Junior English Revised, Haydn Richards (Ginn)
Exercises in Punctuation, John Trevaskis (Evans)
Companion to English, Haydn Richards (Ginn)
Nelson Grammar Books 1-4

b) Materials

Scrabble
Lexicon
Many of the LDA and PTM Materials e.g.
- Prepositions Ref. 60 (LDA)
- Social Sequences Ref. 124 (LDA)
- Chest Heart & Stroke tapes (CHSA)
- Objects (PTM)
- Opposites Ref. 153 (LDA)

Materials for perception, memory, logical thinking

Many LDA and PTM materials e.g.
- Visual Recall cards Ref. 91 (LDA)
- Cube Patterns Ref. 11 (LDA)
- Things that go together Ref. 86 and 163 (LDA)
- Sequential Thinking Sets 4 and 5 (LDA)
- Classification by Use Ref. 49 (LDA)
- Sequences I and II (PTM)
- Word Snap Ref. 118 (LDA)

Logic Cards (Development Learning Materials, Morris Road, Leicester).
Think Links (Dr Edward de Bono, E.J. Arnold & Son, London).

Suppliers

PTM: Photographic Teaching Materials, Winslow Press, 23 Horn Street, Winslow, Bucks.
LDA: Learning Development Aids, Aware House, Duke Street, Wisbech, Cambs.
CHSA: Chest Heart & Stroke Association, Tavistock House North, Tavistock Square, London WC1.

An Example of Provision

Basic Education for Dysphasic Adults in Essex

A class for dysphasic adults was set up in Colchester in 1982 as part of the ALBSU project (see Foreword). That class has continued and others have since been established in most areas of the County. Each group is somewhat different from the others but all have many features in common. This Essex organisation is described not as the only model for provision but as an example.

Teamwork

Support was necessary from both the Health and Education Authorities for the establishment of successful long term provision. Tutors and speech therapists visited one another to make initial contacts and respresentatives from both the Health Authority and the local A.B.E. schemes met to plan provision.

In most areas two hour weekly classes, staffed by tutors and a number of volunteers, have been found suitable as a basis for provision for dysphasic adults. This format is flexible and meets a variety of needs, especially when extended by home tuition.

Staffing

Liaison between Health and Education Authorities and a co-operative approach were needed in staffing such Basic Education groups, as the organisation has been jointly undertaken in all Essex groups by a speech therapist and a basic education tutor working together. The speech therapist's knowledge of dysphasia and background in meeting the needs of dysphasic adults is teamed with the basic education tutor's experience in teaching basic skills and in recruiting, training and supporting volunteers and organising a two hour class. The process of setting up a class together has offered each the opportunity to draw upon her own background and to share in devising suitable learning programmes for dysphasic students. Each provides specialised experience of teaching language skills and literacy.

These class organisers both work closely with the volunteers recruited to participate in one-to-one and group tuition. The Health Authority pays speech therapists for this work and the Adult Basic Education schemes pay the basic education tutors.

A recurring difficulty has been in finding the best way to train the organisers at the initial stages of setting up a new class. Both need to know something about what each profession has to offer. Moreover, the basic education organiser, unfamiliar with the problems of dysphasic adults, needs training in order to be able to apply her skills effectively. Observation of the other at her own work is a first step; observation of established groups is also very useful. Thereafter, the basic education organiser usually trains with the volunteers, attends further seminars and conferences offered for speech therapists and does some specialised reading. The two organisers can offer each other the most useful support.

Helpers

Planning effective tuition has involved developing and utilizing the help offered by unqualified but enthusiastic volunteers. Volunteers working with dysphasic students in these groups may have a number of roles. Within the class situation they have acted primarily as tutors, growing increasingly independent as their skills develop. In listening and talking they meet the dysphasic students' need for companionship. They may also help with transport. For all of these activities volunteers have support and training from group organisers, and they need to understand at the onset that undertaking periods of training is part of their commitment.

Where do they come from?

Adult Basic Education schemes and voluntary bodies already had some people prepared to make this broad commitment but it has sometimes been necessary to recruit specially.

Suitable methods are:

- ☐ posters in libraries, health clinics, doctors' surgeries, Post Offices
- ☐ articles in the local paper
- ☐ advertisements if funding is available
- ☐ word of mouth via existing volunteers.

Of these, articles seem to be the most effective, especially if accompanied by a photograph.

Training

A series of informal training talks to the group of volunteers is used to build up the necessary background for understanding the various problems dysphasic adults have. As they see how they may meet those needs they come to a more realistic expectation of their participation and those who do not wish to be involved drop out. Not everyone who offers help is suitable. Decisions have had to be taken about which volunteers to use. After a number of training sessions and some visits to classes or to speech therapy sessions in hospitals, potential volunteers who are still interested in helping can be assessed and a final selection made. Training talks are usually arranged in sets — a set of three or four talks preceding the volunteers' first meeting with the students, another set some weeks later after they have joined the group as observers.

The first talk is designed to clarify the term 'dysphasia' by discussion and the use of a film or video tape. Other sessions in an initial set usually cover: general teaching approaches, involving a comparison of the differences in group and individual teaching and the manner in which a tutor can relate to someone who cannot communicate easily; the physical disabilities that often accompany dysphasia and how to help someone disabled get in and out of a car or sit in such a way as to aid handwriting; and assessment of communication levels. These first sessions are intended to include topics necessary to prepare the volunteer for practical participation in the group.

Later, after or during a period of teaching with the support of class organisers, volunteers find it easier to make use of a second series of sessions on topics like: methods of developing reading and writing skills; ways to help speech and understanding including perhaps information on sign languages often used with dysphasics; perceptual problems; learning and memory. It is useful to give out brief written handouts to accompany the talks, not only for the sake of those missing the session but as a reference to look back at and reconsider in the light of further experience. The talks are made more interesting and varied if the organisers invite local specialists such as physiotherapists, psychologists and occupational therapists to participate by speaking on their own subject and in so doing, to lend their support to the provision. The organisers try to get together a stock of books for background information to loan out so that the volunteers can extend their reading according to time and interest. An important element of support for volunteers is joint lesson planning and supervised teaching, through which the necessary growth of skill and confidence is encouraged. It offers the chance to discuss ideas and the merits of alternative strategies according to students' individual needs, just as watching organisers and other volunteers teaching group or individual lessons is a guide to good practice by demonstrating what does or doesn't work. This support from organisers is accompanied by guidance in using assessments for planning and in keeping records.

Evaluation of training can be in written form at times, as for example after a series of talks, but is most often discussion between volunteers and organisers. Periods are set aside to evaluate the overall development of a class and to plan for future sessions and the progress of individual students.

Those volunteers offering home tuition need the same kind of continuing support from organisers after their initial training sessions and observation period. Home tutors and organisers need to find time to talk, share materials and information. If home tutors belong to a group for training and maintain contacts with the class, that continuity can be established firmly.

For busy speech therapists and part-time basic education tutors finding the time to provide continuing support and training to new tutors in addition to class time has always been difficult. Post-class lunch sessions or scheduled periodic meetings outside class as well as brief talks to individuals

whenever needed are necessary if effective tuition is to be offered. Extra paid time has sometimes been found but not always. Sometimes the team approach allows one organiser to run the class, while the other withdraws a group for training.

Students

Clearly, interested tutors and speech therapists have only been able to go ahead if they have some potential students.

It has been helpful if the students are initially referred by local speech therapists. The group thus begins with students who are known to be able to benefit from working in a group and who have perhaps particular literacy needs. Others who refer students are social workers, district nurses and GP's. It takes a good deal of effort on the part of organisers to spread word of the group and gain good will and time before credibility is established. Public notices draw people with other difficulties than dysphasia and need to be used with caution.

Transport

Dysphasic students have difficulty travelling to a centre so setting up a class involves organising a parallel transport system. If it is necessary to set up one from scratch there are a number of possibilities which have proved workable:

- family or friends may drive a student to class, perhaps picking up others on the way
- volunteer bodies, such as the Rotary Club or Lions may offer a bus
- volunteer tutors may pick up students as they come in to class and receive travel expenses from the local authority
- hospitals and social services centres usually provide their own transport.

Premises

Finding suitable premises to work in is always a necessary first step. Compromises in the end are made but it is well to begin with the requirements clearly in mind when visiting a location:

- *access*

Can active hemiplegics using tripods or people in wheelchairs manage the steps, doorways, distances and toilets?

- *the place itself*

Is it warm enough for disabled people? Is the place suitable for both group and individual work? Does it offer relative quiet to the eyes as well as to the ear so that a student with disordered perception can concentrate easily? Is there a coffee-making facility?

- *availability*

Is the building available on a morning, probably preferable to an afternoon as a period of maximum energy? Is it available for a strictly limited period or could it be used for a longer period when training volunteers before or after classtime? Is it open most weeks in the year so that continuity of tuition can be achieved?

In Essex the places which met the groups' needs were eventually found in Adult Education Centres, in a church building and in hospitals where dysphasics were already being treated. Another possibility is a place like a social services centre where people may already be gathered for other kinds of day provision. A change from the hospital environment has usually been thought desirable.

A Pattern of Tuition

The two hour session has not been too long a period for tuition if the activities are varied within that time. Both group and individual work have their advantages and the participation of volunteer tutors makes it possible to have a combination of both.

Use of Time

However the session is divided, periods of structured individual and group work are both important as is an opportunity for unstructured social conversation. A pattern for the use of time followed in a number of groups is described below:

Initial half-hour:

Informal conversation over coffee as the students arrive — this offers the opportunity for the students to use their spontaneous or automatic speech in everyday talk with the tutors. This period is a chance for people who are often isolated from ordinary situations and normal people to grow in confidence while, for example, looking at photos someone has brought in, discussing plans for an outing or the like.

45 minutes of group work

Care is taken to limit the size of a group. A group of more than five dysphasic students seems too large in most cases. The periods of waiting for all to speak are too long, the distances between people are too wide, the distractions too many. It is at times necessary to sub-divide the class group to keep the numbers manageable. If so the divisions if possible should serve aims related to the special needs of those within each group. Volunteer tutors usefully take part in group work both by aiding individuals with group activities and in producing their own responses within the lesson and offering in this way a variety of models for communicating in speech or writing. Group work contrasts with individual work by being more sociable and more competitive and perhaps thus more stimulating. It offers the chance to observe others communicating, to learn from others' problems and their methods of coping. It offers repetition of patterns in a varied and interesting way. Good record-keeping aids group lesson planning so that the focus is not haphazard but develops in relation to a group's needs.

45 minutes of individual work:

Most dysphasic students feel that a regular period of individual work is very important to their own progress. One-to-one tuition ensures that someone whose self-esteem may be low is the focus of a tutor's whole attention. That tutor is a volunteer, aided by the organiser to plan a series of lessons and find methods and materials to suit the aims. Continuity of tuition is very important so that a student/tutor pair usually work together for a number of weeks or months; careful record-keeping is found to be necessary to note directions established and progress.

An important aspect of individual tuition is that a student may naturally and effectively take part in planning lessons and setting goals, both immediate and more distant. He can specify real-life uses for his skills and take part in a frank evaluation of what has or hasn't been accomplished. From the tutor's point of view, individual work is easier to direct toward particular interests and particular handicaps or needs. Teaching methods and pacing suited to one but not all can be used and homework planned to take account of an individual's learning ability.

The volunteer provides continuity of development in individual work by developing a programme with one student for a period of two to three months. However she makes sure that during the group sessions she sits with and helps other students so that a student/tutor partnership isn't too limiting. At the end of this period of individual work, a review is made of aims and accomplishments by the student and tutor with the help of organisers so that a new partnership between that student and a different volunteer tutor can begin with looking back over a previous term's work as well as forward to the next. This more comprehensive record backs up the weekly class notes. The rotation of volunteers for individual work is intended to encourage the growth of expertise and to provide the stimulus of working with new people for both student and tutor.

Role of Relatives

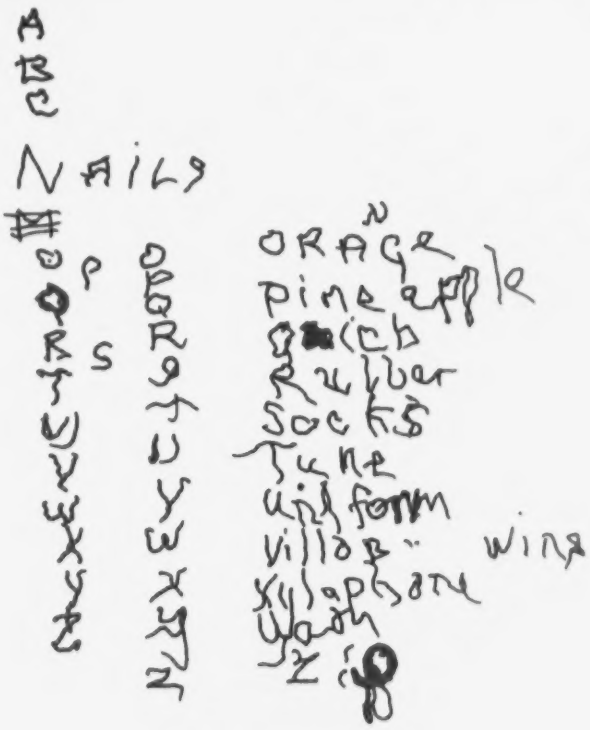
Relatives can be involved in the group if they wish to be. Perhaps they will take some active part like helping with transport or making coffee. Often most useful may be the home support they can offer in carrying out daily activities at the organiser's suggestion to tie in with a class programme; or the ideas they have for activities to meet particular needs that can be incorporated into a learning plan. Equally, support can be offered to relatives by relating progress that is being made in class which may not be evident at home. Life with a dysphasic person can be difficult, so much care has to be taken in making approaches to relatives.

Extending Tuition

A two hour period of tuition once a week is usually not sufficient either for enough progress to be made or to satisfy a student's desire to work on his communication needs. Group organisers try to be aware of what other help their students may be receiving elsewhere. In many cases they are still having hospital-based therapy or attend speech clubs, or they are having rehabilitation treatment such as occupational therapy or physiotherapy. They are often too busy or too tired to take on more tuition.

If not and they want more basic education provision it has been possible in some areas to set up parallel groups on other days of the week which students also attend. Alternatively, reaching out from the support of an established group, experienced volunteers visit students at home for a supplementary session or visit and teach those too disabled to come into class. The class organisers continue to provide back-up and resources in these extended situations.

Real progress can be made, and many of the students can now look back over a year's work and point to their achievements. This is an example of one student's writing at the start of tuition, and one year later.



Dear Joan,

(In Sam Pepys.)

Monday Dec 19:

It started pre-Christmas was party Molly and I were the at Essex university.

John Cowen, had a formed chorus of six singer and sang and gusto.

Friday 23. Son my André come over from Canada. It was nice see again after ten years.

Sunday 25. Dispensed the wine and whishy.

Monday 26. I called at Denis brother pub. with Molly end André, and so to bed.

Useful Information and Addresses

Stroke Books

1. Bolitho, Jane, *Speech and Language Activities for use with Stroke Groups.* Chest Heart & Stroke Association, London 1978
2. Eaton Griffith, Valerie, *A Stroke in the Family,* Chest, Heart & Stroke Association
3. Eaton Griffith, Valerie, *A Time to Speak,* Chest, Heart & Stroke Association, 1983
4. Law, Diana, *Living After a Stroke,* Souvenir Press, London, 1980
5. Miller, Andrea and Ruth Coles, *Practical Activities for Stroke Groups,* Castle Farm, Lea Valley, Wheatampstead, Herts, 1981
6. Luria, A.R. *The Man with a Shattered World,* Penguin, 1975
7. Fawcus, M.R. Williams, J. Williams and M. Robinson *Working With Dysphasics,* Winslow Press, 1983

Literacy Books

1. Hornsby, Beve and Frula Shear, *Alpha to Omega, The A-Z of Teaching Reading, Writing and Spelling,* Heinemann, London, 1980 (with flashcards)
2. MacFarlane, Tom, *Helping Adults to Read,* Macmillan Education, London, 1979
3. MacFarlane, Tom, *Literacy in Action,* Macmillan Education, London, 1979
4. Moorhouse, Catherine, *Helping Adults to Spell,* ALRA, 1977, reprinted ALBSU 1981
5. *Widening Horizons, A Handbook for Literacy Tutors Working with Spastic Adults,* ALBSU, 1981
6. *Working Together - An Approach to Functional Literacy,* ALBSU 1981
7. *Teaching Groups, A Basic Education Handbook,* ALBSU 1981

Useful addresses:

ADA (Action for Dysphasic Adults) Northcot House, 37a Royal Street, London SE1 7LL
Chest, Heart & Stroke Association, Tavistock House North, Tavistock Square, London, W.C.1
College of Speech Therapists, 6 Lechmere Road, London NW2 5BU

Available from
Adult Literacy & Basic Skills Unit,
Kingsbourne House, 229-231 High Holborn,
London WC1V 7DA.
Telephone: 01-405 4017

£2.20
plus postage and packing

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